

FIGHT RACISM! FIGHT IMPERIALISM!

Anti-imperialist paper of the Revolutionary Communist Group

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Brittan's Broadcasting Corporation

The banning of the documentary 'At the Edge of the Union' and the subsequent revelations of MI5 involvement with the BBC have created serious embarrassment for the government and the BBC and provoked widespread protest. Protest not so much against censorship – which is habitual and long-standing – but against the public way in which this ban was carried out. Home Secretary Leon Brittan's demented yapping about giving 'succour to terrorism' and the BBC's public cave-in have exposed the mass media in Britain as simply instruments of ruling class policy.

The ruling class ensures that the media are either under direct government control or staffed by people (with MI5 approval) who can be relied on to toe the line. Media coverage of the war in Ireland confirms this. The media have faithfully served the British war machine. Usually the media have not needed direct government intervention; they have done the job themselves. From 1959 to 1985 at least 49 programmes on Ireland have been banned, censored or delayed. This time, however, the curtain was lifted to reveal the puppet-master pulling the strings.

The campaign against the programme was instigated by the *Sunday Times* (in particular journalist Barrie Penrose) as part of its vendetta against the Republican Movement. They planted a question on Thatcher about TV interviews with the IRA and wrote to Brittan about the programme. This is the latest in a series of anti-Republican stories including: the hounding of Evelyn Glenholmes (labelled a 'terrorist'); the ludicrous story that Sean Mac Stiofain was a British agent; the naming of Martin McGuinness as IRA Chief of Staff (followed swiftly by the *Sunday Times* 'electing' Gerry continued on page 16

VIRAJ MENDIS must stay

Viraj Mendis, a long standing FRFI activist, is now under threat of imminent deportation. A year and a half after the Manchester police confiscated his passport, the racist Home Office has officially informed Viraj that he has 14 days to appeal against a deportation order. The British state is trying to remove from our ranks a comrade who is well known in Manchester for his work in anti-racist, anti-apartheid and Irish solidarity campaigns. Viraj has lived in Britain for 12 years. But because he is black and because he is a political activist, the Home Office is invoking, as it does with thousands of other black people, its pernicious immigration controls to uproot and throw him out of the country.

As an active supporter of the Tamil liberation struggle, he faces political persecution and worse if deported to Sri Lanka. FRFI and the Viraj Mendis Defence Campaign which has been fighting for Viraj's right to stay will step up the struggle. We are determined to stop this political deportation and to strike a blow against all immigration controls. We appeal to all our supporters and readers to join us in this fight.

Whether coincidence or not, the Home Office order came just one week after Viraj had won a significant victory against the Manchester police, demonstrating the widespread support his campaign has already built. On 8 August he was arrested while walking alone into Manchester city centre. Kneaded in the head while in the police van, Viraj was strip searched at the station and then charged with 'breach of the peace'. Simultaneously he was served with a notice under the 1971 Immigration Act which could have resulted in his deportation.

The police however failed to account for the rapid organised political response of Manchester FRFI and the Viraj Mendis Defence Campaign which within less than 2 weeks forced them to drop the charge. As soon as Viraj's

arrest was discovered dozens of supporters rushed to the police station, the press was contacted as were MPs, councillors and others. Thousands of leaflets were produced and a demonstration planned for Saturday 17 August. 200 people from many organisations and political parties turned out to march through the city centre condemning the police action and demanding the dropping of the charge. On Tuesday 19 August, Viraj appeared in court supported by a 100-strong picket. The police were forced to drop the charge and virtually admitted false arrest.

The police failed to ensure Viraj's deportation on 'criminal grounds'. But now the Home Office, hoping to avoid a clash with a growing and effective campaign, is planning to deport him as quickly as possible. We will fight to defeat this latest Home Office attack. We are determined to secure Viraj's right, and that of all black people, to live in Britain free of the fear of deportation. With your support we can succeed. Smash all immigration controls!

For information on how you can help contact: VMDC, c/o Box 38, Corn Exchange Buildings, Hanging Ditch, Manchester M3 4BN.

Eddie Abrahams



APARTHEID TREMBLES

COMMUNISTS AND NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENTS

Centre Pages

On 20 July a state of emergency was declared in 36 of South Africa's magisterial districts. By 22 August a total of 2,131 people had been detained. 1,029 were still being held. In the first two weeks of the state of emergency 24 people had been killed in township protests. In the last week of August alone 28 people were killed in the townships round Cape Town. The declaration of the state of emergency was a public admission by the apartheid regime that it is facing the greatest people's revolt in its bloody history.

The emergency powers allow any 'law enforcement' officer to detain any person for 14 days – extendable by authority of the Minister of 'Justice' – and grant the State President, any member of the Cabinet, any 'law enforcement' officer, any public servant, or any other person acting under instruction indemnity from any criminal or civil proceedings. It is a licence for unbridled detention, murder and torture by the apartheid regime. On 31 July restrictions were placed on funerals forbidding marches to cemeteries, political speeches and the display of banners and flags. On 15 August, the day of Botha's speech, in an attempt to break the successful schools boycott, all activities unrelated to school work on school premises were banned and any school child found outside school during class time was made liable to detention. A week later, on 22 and 23 August, at least 800 school children, many of 7 or 8 years of age, were rounded up in Soweto. On 27 August the Confederation of South African Students (COSAS) was banned. Finally, on 31 August owners of black businesses were detained and their businesses closed in an attempt to break the rapidly spreading boycott campaign against white businesses.

The people have been subjected to repeated police and army invasions of the townships; attacks on funerals and marches; as well as the mass detentions continued on page 4



PAUL MATTHEW

CLOSE DOWN THE
SOUTH AFRICAN
EMBASSY
page 5

DIVIDED NATION

EDITORIAL



MINERS STRIKE

More shock waves

The battle continues between the national NUM and the Notts breakaway scab union – to be called the Union of Democratic Mineworkers. So far, it seems likely that only the Durham Colliery Trades and Allied Craftsmen (1,200 members) and the South Derbyshire Area (3,000) members will join the scabs, the latter after a ballot. With the NUM campaign and announcements by Labour Party and TUC leaders that there is no question of recognition for the Notts breakaway union, it seems that scab leader Roy Lynk and his allies face a tougher battle than they anticipated in order to win 50% of the ballot in September. Three separate opinion polls taken during July and August in Notts indicate a level of support ranging from 46-56% in favour of the National Union.

Meanwhile, figures released during August have added an extra £4.02 billion to the known costs of the miners' strike. Losses, directly attributable to the strike, of £250m by British Rail, of £1.75bn by the NCB and of £2.02bn by the CEEGB could mean that the final figure approaches £8bn. The benefits to be reaped by the ruling class from this staggering investment are of course the possible defeat of Scargill and the NUM and a streamlined, profitable mining industry ready for privatisation. Streamlining at least is going ahead. 22,700 left the industry between February 1984 and July 1985, a decline of nearly 12%, mainly since the end of the strike. The greatest decline is in Scotland where 30% have gone, leaving a workforce of only 9,200. Ominously these figures do not include many pit closures recently announced, but still to go through the colliery review procedure, or the 50,000 redundancies revealed last month in the NCB's 'New Plan for Coal'.

Sacked and gaoled miners

The campaign over sacked and imprisoned miners is being quietly buried in the Labour movement. In Scotland, the NCB has now agreed to review individually the cases of sacked miners. But the Scottish Area NUM, headed by CPGB members McGahey and Bolton, recom-

mends acceptance of a deal which will mean that any miners taken back will lose rest day, holiday and sick pay and other benefits, by 'starting again'. Obviously many sacked men are not keen to accept a return to work on these terms. Scab Kinnock is meanwhile doing all he can to prevent the issue of sacked and gaoled miners from becoming a central issue at the Labour Party Conference. Many resolutions are calling for a future Labour government to grant an amnesty to imprisoned miners and to pay reparations to unions like the NUM, robbed of their funds through court actions.

Women's conference

The issue of sacked and imprisoned miners was also taken up at the Women Against Pit Closures conference on 17 August. Well over 800 attended but no decisions were taken over structure and future policies. Despite objections from a number of women, such decisions were deferred to a delegate conference in September. Chairperson Ann Lilburn condemned the decision of the NUM Conference to deny affiliation rights to women as making 'a mockery' of the countless tributes paid to them by area leaders, and stating that to say that they were 'bloody angry' was 'putting it mildly'.

Altogether, 151 miners have now been

Slowly but surely the political climate in Britain is changing. The Thatcher government's attempts to radically restructure British capitalism at the expense of the poor and the oppressed have run out of steam. The promised fruits have not materialised. Unemployment continues to rise and the government increasingly shows it can only force through its programme by the use of force – imposing new laws or interpretations of laws with the aid of riot clad police and backed by a pliant judiciary. Loud mouthed, arrogant bullying has become the standard government response to political views and opinions which stand in its way. Those calling for an amnesty for striking miners convicted during the miners' strike are accused of having the 'morality of the terrorist and revolutionary'. To allow a democratically elected Sinn Fein representative to argue his standpoint on television is to give 'succour to terrorism'. And all this comes from a government whose foreign policy has become more and more identified with the terrorism of the right – the loyalists in the Six Counties of Ireland, the murderous contras in Nicaragua, the Zionist backed phalangist terror gangs in Lebanon and the racist government in South Africa.

The political bankruptcy of Thatcher's economic policies, the attacks on the poor and oppressed, the growing assault on democratic rights and the government's criminal foreign policy have inevitably brought forth resistance. More and more sections of people are being forced into political life. The mining communities led by their women fighting for jobs, the low paid workers fighting privatisation, the shutting down of hospitals, nurseries and other social welfare facilities, the youth fighting homelessness as well as unemployment, black people fighting racism and deportation, Greenham women fighting for peace and thousands of people prepared to demonstrate their solidarity in this country with the black masses of South Africa have taken to the streets and demonstrated that they are a politi-

cal force to be reckoned with in the future.

But all these struggles have taken place in isolation. There is no political party in this country which will identify with them and put significant funds and resources into them. For the jobless and oppressed in Britain have no political representation amongst the major political parties. On the contrary every traditional political party has sought to distance itself from the struggle of the people against oppression, at first attempting to control it and, if that does not succeed, by condemning and isolating it. Britain is now a divided nation economically, socially and politically. The representatives of the more privileged sections of the working class are attempting to rebuild their authority and control around Neil Kinnock and the Labour Party. The miners' strike had sent shock waves resounding through their ranks but they are gradually regaining their ground. These

JOIN THE RCG!

Take the side of all those struggling against imperialism – Join the RCG! A movement must be built in Britain in solidarity with the struggle of the oppressed peoples of Ireland, Southern Africa, Central America – Join the RCG!

A movement must be built which stands for the oppressed in Britain fighting racism, repression, poverty – Join the RCG!

A movement must be built in Britain which takes on the treachery of the opportunist leaders of the Labour and trade union movement and defeats them; for a revolutionary anti-imperialist alternative – Join the RCG!

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acquitted in the courts of riot and illegal assembly charges. Most spectacular of these was the acquittal at Sheffield Crown Court in mid-August of 14 miners after a trial lasting 3 months (including eight days of testimony from the Chief Constable of South Yorkshire) and which cost £1½m. This led to the acquittal of 79 others awaiting trial. Others facing charges over events at Doncaster and Rossington have also been acquitted.

Defence lawyers at the Orgreave trial exposed police forgery of signatures and fabrication of evidence. 'We just wrote out what we were told' said PC Fred Browning from Merseyside. But the more substantial political points about the trial and events at Orgreave in June 1984, were made by one of the defence solicitors, Gareth Pierce, in an excellent article in *The Guardian* (11 August 1985) 'How they rewrote the law at Orgreave'. She states '...in this country we now have a standing army available to be deployed against gatherings of civilians whose congregation is disliked by senior police officers...' is the absolute right to free assembly is being abolished. Assistant Chief Constable Clements, when reminded by the trial judge that people had a right to demonstrate peacefully at Orgreave, simply reiterated 'people had no right to be there'.

Gareth Pierce points to the police manual which came to light at the trial 'Public Order, Tactical Options' whose illegal paramilitary manoeuvres with short shields and batons were used to deliberately intimidate and injure the crowd at Orgreave. This was illustrated in the police film of events which showed three hours of these illegal 'non-defensive' manoeuvres before miners started to respond with stones and barricades. TV News film simply reversed the order of events. With the collusion of the Labour Party and TUC, the ruling class is now building on the lessons learned.

Olivia Adamson

political forces subordinate every significant political action today to their overriding political interest, the election of a Labour government under Neil Kinnock. Anyone whose fightback threatens, in any way, their political goal will be isolated, attacked and then left to fight alone. The mining communities experienced this, so did the youth demonstrating against slave labour schemes, black people fighting racist attacks, and so do anti-apartheid activists prepared to protest and picket on the streets against British collaboration with apartheid. But the Labour Party's social base will become smaller as the economic crisis of imperialism throws millions more people into the ranks of those forces prepared to resist. Splits will develop in the official Labour movement as the political authority of the 'forces of the past' rapidly declines. New political openings will be created and new political voices will be heard, as a new movement is forced into existence.

Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism! has always taken the side of the oppressed both in Britain and abroad. Many read our paper for its coverage of international struggles particularly in Ireland and South Africa. We have always argued that our task in Britain is to build an anti-imperialist, anti-racist movement in solidarity with oppressed peoples to defeat British imperialism here at home. Today as many British workers are driven into the ranks of the oppressed, that goal becomes a realisable one. Since the miners' strike it has become clear that important developments are taking place in the working class movement in Britain. New struggles are taking place, new political questions raised, new divisions, splits and realignments are possible as millions more people are forced into political struggles in Britain. *Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!* has to cover these developments and the political issues and disputes they raise. And they need to be covered in some depth. We are therefore going to change the structure of the paper and give more emphasis to political struggles in Britain. To do this we need your help.

Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism! needs to have another journalist working on the paper if it is to give adequate political coverage to the working class struggles in Britain. Those involved need to be interviewed, political conferences must be attended, political trials need to be covered and so on. A new political tradition in Britain is in the process of being created and we need the resources to give clear political support to such a development.

How can you help? We are asking you to pledge a sum of money, large or small, every month to pay the wages, and other expenses needed to have another journalist working for the paper. As soon as the money comes in, we will act on this and set someone to work. Fill in the bankers' order form, or give the money each month to an FRFI seller. Act now! There is a political struggle to be won.

RACIST DAILY MAIL

A campaign has been established in Manchester in protest against an article from the gutter printed on the front page of the *Daily Mail* of 5 August entitled 'Brides for Sale'.

The racist article pretended to show that Asian women were being sold to 'strangers seeking UK citizenship'. A sub-article on page 2 with the disgusting title of 'Racket that's hard to stop' showed the reason and source of the story. It was clearly commissioned either by or in the interests of the Home Office to create a climate of public opinion whereby they can justify new immigration rules.

This attempt has however come unstuck with the development of protests in Manchester and elsewhere, supported by FRFI, against the *Daily Mail*; mass pickets of their offices have been held and demands for a right of reply made.

Chris Fraser

DEFEND JOHN OSSUNIYI FROM DEPORTATION

John Ossuniyi came to Britain as a student in 1979. He is married and living with Carmen and three children in Manchester. John wishes to stay in Britain with his family; not to be deported to Nigeria. His experience shows, not only the racist brutality of the British state which cares nothing for family life, but also the links between the police and the Home Office. He was held in Strangeways prison for three weeks after being stopped by the traffic police to investigate his driving documents.

Although his release was secured, the Home Office is determined to deport him and split up the family. For further details write to John Ossuniyi Defence Campaign, c/o Cheetham Family Centre, 301 Cheetham Hill Road, Manchester M8 7SN (tel 061 205 1677)



Shamira Kassam and her children murdered in their home in Ilford, London

RACIST ATTACKS MULTIPLY

A murderous arson campaign against black families is being organised by racists in East and South London. On 15 July, a pregnant Asian woman, Mrs Shamira Kassam and her three small children were burned to death in their Ilford home. Two weeks earlier an Asian family of 15 narrowly escaped death when their home in Newham was fired. On 8 August 5 members of an Asian family, including a 10-month-old baby and a 70-year-old man were taken to hospital after their first floor flat was set on fire in Bow, East London. On 11 August the Bromley Tandoori Restaurant was set to flames in a second attack within 24 hours.

After another arson attack on the home

of the Kayani family in Leyton, Dr Zafar Malik of the Pakistani Welfare Society stated: 'This attack follows a consistent pattern and must be part of the concerted campaign of terror against Asians'.

This terror campaign is aided and abetted by the police who are making

NEWHAM 7 SENTENCED

Four members of the Newham 7 who were found guilty of affray for organising community self-defence against fascists, were sentenced in August to 100 days community service each. Affray usually carries a prison sentence, but Judge Neil Denison found it impossible to ignore mounting evidence of racist attacks in Newham. He was also presented with 10,000 signatures to a petition in support of the Newham 7. The Newham 7 are unrepentant. One of the convicted, Parvaiz Khan said: 'I would do the same again.' and his brother Bahadur stated: 'We have to look after ourselves as the law does not look after us.'

strenuous efforts to cover up the racist character of the attacks and subjecting its black victims to what amounts to torture. After the attack on their home, Mr and Mrs Kayani were taken to the police station. Mr Kayani said:

'Following our tragedy we were put in different rooms without food for eight hours and underwent intensive interrogation... Our 2½ month old baby was crying from hunger and was refused milk.'

KAMAL KUMAR WINS

On 23 July the *Manchester Evening News* ran a front page headline article on Kamal Kumar's victory in his fight against deportation. What it did not say was that Kamal and his defence campaign had to suffer hardship for many years, and had to fight through numerous court hearings, protests, public meetings and demonstrations, including that on 23 March. What the *Evening News* did not say was that he should not have had to struggle at all since, even according to the racist immigration laws, he should have had the right to stay; that the Home Office delayed his application and shamelessly used the break-up of his marriage to try to deport him. FRFI congratulates Kamal and all those who fought with him. Kamal Kumar will stay! A victory for one is a victory for all!

Rosmina Defence Campaign

THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES

Rosmina Banu Randera is one of the 2000 women who are supposed to benefit from the Home Office's new immigration rules (see New Home Office Attacks on this page). Her husband Mohamed Azhar is threatened with deportation on the grounds that he has no right of residence in this country given that Rosmina is classed as a 'British Overseas Citizen' (second class in plain language) under the Nationality Act.

Under the new rules differences in citizenship status are allegedly eliminated in regard to the entry of spouses and therefore Mohamed's right to remain in Britain seems secure. Yet the Home Office could now quite easily invoke the primary purpose rule against Mohamed and continue its effort to deport him. Rosmina's campaign will therefore continue.

On 14 September, FRFI will be speaking at a public meeting in her support alongside Rosmina, Steve Cohen (Manchester Law Centre), Councillor Val Stevens, the PWA and other campaigns. The meeting will take place in the Longsight Library, Manchester at 2pm.

For further information contact the RDC, 593 Stockport Road, Longsight, Manchester.

the black community, on basic human rights, must be opposed; opposition will be led by the most oppressed.

Patrick and Chris

New Home Office attack on black community

Following the ruling of the European Court of Human Rights which found British immigration law to be sexist, the government has introduced new immigration rules effective from 26 August. The rules prevent fiancées and wives freely entering the country and restrict black people's rights to state benefits.

The new rules apply the same racist discrimination to wives and fiancées seeking entry as currently applies to husbands and fiancés. The primary purpose rule now applies to women: this requires the husband/fiance to satisfy the Home Office that the primary purpose of entry is not to settle in Britain. When this rule was first introduced, the proportion of fiancées refused entry increased from 7% to 83%.

Furthermore, the new rules state that entry will be refused to all spouses and fiancée(s) unless further wideranging requirements are met. The couple will have to guarantee, possibly in writing, that they will 'accommodate' and 'maintain' themselves without 'recourse to public funds'—Supplementary Benefit, Housing Benefit, Family Income Supplement and housing under the Housing (Homeless Persons) Act 1977—will not be available. Where a written undertaking is given and broken, the DHSS may seek to 'recover' any payments. Immigration is thus restricted to the whites and the rich. The rules go on to state that a person's 'leave to remain' may be curtailed on many grounds, including failure to comply with the above, and even more sinister 'if, in the light of his character, conduct or associations, it is undesirable to permit him to remain in the United Kingdom'. In effect those who succeed in entering the country will be on permanent probation.

The Home Office is attempting to introduce this massive attack on black people's rights under the guise of 'reform'. Under the new immigration rules black men as well as black women will effectively be denied the right to marry the partner of their choice—the poor will have no chance. This attack on



Fire attack on home of Bengali family in Bow

Cabinet ministers, police chiefs and bourgeois moralists are ever ready to preach homilies about the desirability of a secure family life. The hypocrisy of such 'morality' is evident in their toleration of such vicious attacks and in their destruction of thousands of black families by immigration laws. The ruling class has every interest in terrorising the black community, criminalising its youth who defend it and forcing the

community into passive acceptance of oppression. But the black community of East London is not prepared to tolerate government and police inactivity and complicity with racists. Mr Kayani stated after the attack on his home that if the government failed to do anything:

'... then we will have to retaliate and do something ourselves.'

Eddie Abrahams

NALGO STRIKE AGAINST RACISM

Since Monday 5 August 450 NALGO members in North London have been on strike against racism. We work for the local Islington Council. The Council's failure to effectively implement their anti-racist election promises has led to our action.

The roots of the strike lie in the rent accounts section of the Housing Department. There four black workers have had to leave because of sustained and systematic harassment by other staff—black workers in the section have been shunned, insulted and racially abused over a long period of time. 3 of these racists were found guilty of racial harassment at internal disciplinary proceedings (where they received assistance from leading rightwinger Lady Birdwood). Because of the Council's decentralisation plans, these 3 were due to work with the public as of the beginning of August. Islington NALGO decided to call on the Council to stand by its 1982 Election Manifesto pledge which said that 'Labour would treat very seriously any grievance against a Council employee connected with racial discrimination'. NALGO asked that the 3 be prevented from working with the public. Islington Council agreed to keep 2 of the 3 out of its planned neighbourhood offices but refused in the 3rd case—a woman who was to commence at the neighbour-

hood office in a leading and influential post, that of Assistant Neighbourhood Officer. In the face of this and the prospect of a racist sharing the running of a number of black staff and supposedly delivering a non-racist service to the public, NALGO members refused to open the office. This action was backed by all NALGO members in area teams, neighbourhood offices and housing advisory centres. On Wednesday 14 August all 2,000 NALGO members struck for the day. On 20 August the Women's Race Relations and Police Committee Support Units joined the strike.

The Labour Group which runs Islington Council have yet to meet. Delegations to Councillors' surgeries have met hostility. Local Council-sponsored anti-racism is being tested in this struggle. Councillors in Islington should immediately take sides with the strikers and agree their demands.

A NALGO striker

Six weeks after the declaration of the State of Emergency in South Africa leaders of South Africa's four main business organisations urged the Government to open negotiations with black leaders 'even if some of these are currently in detention'. A separate statement by Mr Gavin Relly, chairman of Anglo American, the country's leading mining company argued that the cause of the run on the Rand was 'not economic but political'. He warned the government that an 'acceleration of the reform programme, in particular in regard to citizenship, influx control, a positive urbanisation policy and the development of a unitary education system' were necessary for the 'long term health of the country.' Genuine negotiations with representatives of all groups in South Africa for a 'new system of genuine power sharing' had to take place, he said.

Domestic and foreign capitalists are running scared as a result of the upsurge of revolt and the abysmal failure of Botha's speech to the National Party on 15 August. Outright terror and murder has failed to intimidate the black people: their resistance has grown during the State of Emergency, not diminished. Botha's intransigent, bombastic speech only managed to fan the flames. For South African and foreign capitalists the prospects of stable conditions for making superprofits are diminishing rapidly.

On 16 August, the day after Botha's speech, the South African rand plummeted to a new low of 38.5 cents against the US dollar and 3.654 rands to the pound. Eighteen months ago the dollar was equal to about one rand and there were 1.75 rands to the pound. At the time, Finance Minister, Barend du Plessis, confidently predicted that pressure on the rand would ease as soon as 'the significance of the President's speech dawned on "informed" people'.

Unfortunately for Mr du Plessis, 'informed people' soon realised that

Botha's speech had no chance of quelling resistance in the townships and had seriously embarrassed one of South Africa's closest allies, President Reagan. The South African *Business Day* went so far as to describe Botha's performance as that of a 'hick politician'.

Two weeks after Botha's speech, which was by now looking like a devastating own goal, the rand had touched an all time low of 33 US cents. On 27 August, the same day the Rev Allan Boesak was arrested, the South African authorities suspended all foreign exchange and stock market transactions until 2 September. They were bowing to the inevitable. The political crisis had led to net sales of securities by foreign investors of Rand 108 million in May, Rand 180 million in June, and Rand 200 million in July. Whereas in the previous 15 months foreign investors were readily buying such securities to the tune of some Rand 1.2 billion (£315 million). Share prices of British companies with interests in South Africa and South African gold-mining groups immediately suffered sharp falls. The growing political crisis and the threatened miners'

ships. All the detentions and apartheid terror, the torture of detainees and political assassinations, curfews and censorship have failed to quell the people's resistance.

The UDF called for a mass march to Pollsmoor prison to demand the release of the people's leader, Nelson Mandela, to take place on Wednesday 28 August. On 23 August 20 UDF leaders were arrested for calling the march. On 27 August Rev Allan Boesak, founder member of the UDF and President of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, was arrested. The march was called off but thousands attempted to get to the prison. All day they fought with police in an effort to break through massive security cordons. Five demonstrators were shot dead in Guguletu and a large number arrested. In the days which followed the area around Cape Town witnessed major uprisings. At least 28 people died including two young children. In Mitchells Plain barricades were set alight whilst masked youth threw petrol bombs and stones. At the end of August two whites were killed and two injured by people returning from a funeral in Duncan Village. Steven Tshwete, a UDF leader, emerged from hiding for the funeral and warned Botha that it would not be long 'before the white areas of East London were burning.'

The black trade unionists have also fought back. On 3/4 August the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) declared a strike to begin 25 August for a 22% wage rise. The NUM also said that its members would be instructed to boycott white businesses if the state of emergency was not lifted within 72 hours and if any immigrant mineworkers were deported. On 22 August the strike was postponed to consider improved offers from 4 of the 5 mining companies. Only the Afrikaner-owned General Mining Corporation (Gencor) refused to improve its offer. The NUM has since announced that strike action will begin as we go to press. 46% of apartheid's export earnings come from gold whilst coal is not only an important export earner but also apartheid's major source of energy. The NUM's defiant stand therefore poses a further major threat both to the apartheid economy and to foreign confidence in the regime.

From township risings to strikes to school boycotts to consumer boycotts to 'illegal' demonstrations, the people are stepping up the struggle against the apartheid regime. The declaration of the state of emergency has only proved once again that repression breeds resistance. The urgent need now is for the people in Britain to respond and create a state of 'emergency' here for all the British aiders and abettors of apartheid.

Charine James and
Terry O'Halloran



POPPERFOTO

APARTHEID TREMBLES

continued from page 1

and political assassinations. Birdshot, rubber bullets, teargas and live rounds, as well as beatings with sjamboks, have been widely used in a failed attempt to crush the people's struggle. On 1 August the assassins struck again.

Victoria Nonyamezelo Mxenge, defence lawyer for the 16 UDF treason trialists, was brutally murdered. As she got out of a car she was shot in the head and then hacked to death in the driveway of her own home, in front of her three children. Four years ago her husband, Mlungisi Griffiths Mxenge, was found hacked to death. His killers are still at large as are the assassins of Victoria Mxenge. On 13 August, Winnie Mandela's home was fire-bombed. Even before the state of emergency 27 UDF leaders had 'disappeared' and 11 had been assassinated.

15,000 marched in Durban in protest at the murder of Mrs Mxenge. They carried placards 'State of emergency = legalised Manslaughter'. Armed police with dogs broke up the march and many demonstrators were arrested. On 20 July at the funeral in Craddock of four Duda members of COSAS—since banned—40,000 gathered in a local soccer stadium. They carried ANC, SACP and other banners in support of 'banned' organisations. A huge red flag with the hammer and sickle was unfurled. Jeers and catcalls greeted the announcement of the state of emergency. On 23 July 50,000 gathered in Duda for the funeral of 15 student activists killed by police. The people's defiance at the funerals forced the regime to ban political funerals.

On 16 August, the day after Botha's speech, the regime announced that Benjamin Moloise would be judicially murdered (hanged) on 21 August. Benjamin Moloise was framed for the execution of a policeman—an act of revenge by the regime for Moloise's refusal to act as a state witness against ANC members. On 20 August a three week reprieve was announced. The regime is now threatening to murder Benjamin Moloise on 11 September.

The detentions have been aimed primarily at the local leaders of the people's resistance: trade unionists, members of students' and women's organisations, member of local civic groups and clergy supporting the people. The UDF and AZAPO have been particular targets in an attempt to remove their local leader-

strike were taking their toll, as the imperialists were losing confidence in the ability of the South African regime to guarantee them their usual superprofits. More and more foreign investors are deciding to pull their money out of South Africa. At the end of August McAlpine, the British construction and quarrying group joined the ranks of British companies pulling out of South Africa and sold its South African subsidiary to the South African Gencor mining group for £17.6 million cash.

The fall in value of the Rand has devastating consequences for the economy. On 1 September, the day before the Stock Exchange was due to reopen, Barend du Plessis was forced to announce a unilateral 4 month suspension of repayments of its foreign debt. It is estimated that South Africa's short term foreign loans total about \$12 billion out of a total debt of \$19 billion. The suspension of repayments is intended to protect the Rand from further devaluation and allow time for rescheduling of the debts. Du Plessis's announcement came in the middle of a hastily arranged and apparently unproductive trip by Dr Gerhard De Kock, governor of the South African Reserve Bank, to see the governor of the Bank of England and US bankers.

It is clear that the crisis in the money markets and the massive sale of foreign-owned shares has nothing to do with any moral disquietude about the system of apartheid. Nor are the rumoured talks with the ANC a sign that leading South African businessmen have seen the 'light'. On the contrary, they are the clearest expression that international capitalists are interested in one thing—the ability to make profits. If Botha cannot guarantee their continued wealth, then they will look elsewhere. If the regime manages to quell the resistance of black people over the coming months, these international robbers will be rushing to reinvest in apartheid.

But the options for the apartheid regime are getting fewer by the day. The elaborate system of black collaborators in the townships, created by the regime in the last two years, has been successfully crushed by the action of the people. Now the townships have instituted their own consumer boycott. A boycott of all shops owned by whites and government collaborators has spread in both the eastern and western Cape, Johannesburg and Pretoria. Many traders have reported drops in turnover from 40% to even 100%. Some chain stores in Pretoria city centre closed at 11.30am on one Saturday because there were no shoppers. The fierce determination of the people is clear—they want an end to apartheid now.

In this context, the regime has been seriously unnerved by the threat of international sanctions. President Reagan will have serious difficulty resisting the sanctions bill in the US congress, and in Europe, Britain and West Germany stand alone in their refusal to even consider the prospect. Thatcher's argument—which, incidentally, most British left groups share—is that sanc-

tions will harm the black population of South Africa. Yet black people in South Africa and their organisations—in particular both the ANC and the PAC—have repeated and strengthened their call for the total isolation of apartheid. President Oliver Tambo of the ANC has stated that in fact the imposition of sanctions is the only way for the western world to influence change in South Africa. When the black people of South Africa are laying down their lives in the struggle against apartheid, the imposition of sanctions would be the clearest expression of solidarity with their struggle.

It is undoubtedly true, as most of the left in Britain argue, that the Thatcher government will never, of its own accord, introduce sanctions against South Africa. Thatcher's Britain and apartheid South Africa are totally wedded, economically and ideologically. Britain has proved to be South Africa's staunchest ally in the present crisis for precisely this reason. Certainly a campaign of letter writing and petitions will not shake the British government nor end British collaboration with apartheid. But to reject the campaign for sanctions dodges the issue. For many years the British left has ignored the call by the South African people, and substituted advice to the South African liberation movement on how it should conduct its struggle. At this critical time for the liberation struggle, the call for solidarity can no longer go unheard.

But there is more at issue than solidarity. The victory of the black people of South Africa and their allies against apartheid will be a devastating blow to British imperialism. Openly taking the side of South African freedom, is a step towards our own freedom. Thatcher can be challenged, just as Reagan has

been challenged, by a movement of the people out on the streets in support of the South African masses. Those who have, for 25 years, scorned the notion of the consumer boycott, should take note of the consumer boycott in South Africa. Those who think that Thatcher and British imperialism are unassailable should take note of the courageous militancy and determination of the South African people.

A boycott movement in Britain is not only possible, but an essential ingredient to building the anti-racist and anti-imperialist movement in Britain. A campaign for sanctions, which is prepared to bite hard in the trade unions, local councils and on the streets, will give practical assistance to the people of South Africa and start the challenge to British racism and British imperialism.

The consensus in British politics is breaking down. Britain is now a clearly divided nation—the division is between those who can prosper under British imperialist rule at the expense of the majority, and those who have no choice but to fight back—black people, the unemployed, the poor. The leadership of this movement cannot remain in the hands of the privileged, the collaborators, the hired servants of British imperialism—any more than it could remain in their hands in South Africa.

Those of us in Britain who want the people to rule in the interests of the majority not only in South Africa but also in Britain, those of us who will challenge racism not only in South Africa but also in Britain, those of us who want democratic rights, freedom and justice, not only in South Africa, but also in Britain, we will build the movement which will end British collaboration with apartheid.

Carol Brickley and David Reed

SUPPORT SOUTH AFRICAN MINERS! CLOSE DOWN THE SOUTH AFRICAN EMBASSY!

1,000 people joined City Group's march and rally on 24 August for an end to the State of Emergency in South Africa and in solidarity with the South African miners. On its way to the South African Embassy the demonstration stopped at the headquarters of ICI and BP, two of the British multinationals which fuel apartheid. The demonstration also stopped at the Home Office to protest against racism and immigration controls.

While demonstrators concentrated on making their protest against the state of emergency, the police were more anxious about how 1,000 people would picket the racist embassy. En route to Trafalgar Square the police produced the Commissioner's regulations which give the police a free hand to clear the area around the embassy whenever they wish, for any reason.

When the march reached Trafalgar Square, 200 protestors already stationed outside the embassy greeted them. The police stopped the demonstration before it reached the embassy and formed a cordon across the front of the march. But demonstrators brushed aside the police cordon and took over the road outside the embassy. The police then packed the pavement outside the embassy gates. The police had earlier arrested two anti-apartheid campaigners for the crime of standing on the pavement. The rally at the end of the demonstration was held in the road, and David Kitson spelled out the message of the march—**isolate apartheid! Close down the embassy! Sanctions now!**

FRF/RCG sent a large contingent to the demonstration and there was a broad range of support from political groups and two marching bands. Islington NALGO workers on strike against racism, the London Irish Women's Centre, the Black Consciousness Movement of Azania, North Westminster Labour Party, CPSA, Gays and Lesbians Support the Miners, GLAIR, Labour Party Black Sections, Socialist Workers Party, Workers Revolutionary Party, GLC NALGO, Spartacist League, Yorkshire Campaign Against Apartheid, ALTARF, RCPB (M-L) and Workers Power gave welcome support to the protest.

FIGHTING APARTHEID

FRFI activists throughout Britain redoubled anti-apartheid work in response to the State of Emergency in South Africa

Manchester FRFI initiated a campaign to close down the South African Airways office in the City Centre. 70-80 people from different organisations now join the weekly pickets and have formed Manchester Campaign Against South African Airways

Bradford With Bradford AA Group, FRFI have taken part in regular pickets of Barclays and a town centre rally which was supported by local councillors, SWP, Red Youth and others. A rally is planned for 30 September: 'Smash Apartheid! Smash Racism! Sanctions Now!'

Liverpool FRFI, working with the AA Group have launched a boycott campaign with pickets of city shops. A 24 hour picket is called for October

Glasgow Weekly pickets of the South African Consulate supported by Glasgow anarchists, the SWP and others. Also supporting and publicising the recently started Glasgow AA pickets - despite CPGB AA opposition to this support

Edinburgh Following the successful rally organised in June FRFI is working with others, including the SWP and Women for Peace, for weekly street meetings and pickets in spite of the continued hostility of the CPGB AA group to any proposals for activity

Leeds FRFI has held city centre protests open to and supported by other groups

Yorkshire FRFI comrades have joined with other AA activists to set up The Yorkshire Campaign Against Apartheid - aiming to co-ordinate militant protest throughout Yorkshire particularly linking apartheid and racism here in Britain

London FRFI has initiated Islington Rally Against Apartheid (ISRAA): holds weekly planning meetings and activities, pickets, motorcades, flyposting and leafletting - to build for a major rally in September: all local groups invited to join in. Supported by local Labour Party activists, trade unions, immigrant workers groups, and anti-deportation campaigns, claimants union, SWP and others

City AA - FRFI has worked in City AA helping to build the weekly pickets, a demonstration, mass pickets, Downing Street pickets, street meetings, court pickets and the defence campaign for the 100+ arrested

Dundee We have been working with the local AA group for street meetings, pickets and protests.

Glasgow FRFI picket the South African Consulate in St Georges Place (off Buchanan Street) every Saturday from 12 noon to 1.30pm

The Anti-Apartheid Movement pickets the South African Consulate in Glasgow every Friday from 1pm until 2pm. Make your voice heard - support the pickets on Fridays and Saturdays.

MANCHESTER CAMPAIGN AGAINST SOUTH AFRICAN AIRWAYS

Shortly before the introduction of the state of emergency FRFI, together with others, established this campaign against apartheid focusing on the South African Airways as the most visible representative of apartheid in Manchester. Since July a weekly picket has been held of their office with up to 70 people present. On the first occasion the police, having entered the office and spoken to the staff, asked if we intended to cause trouble because the staff were scared stiff! From then on the SAA vetted all customers on each occasion that we held a picket. Most recently they shut up shop completely.

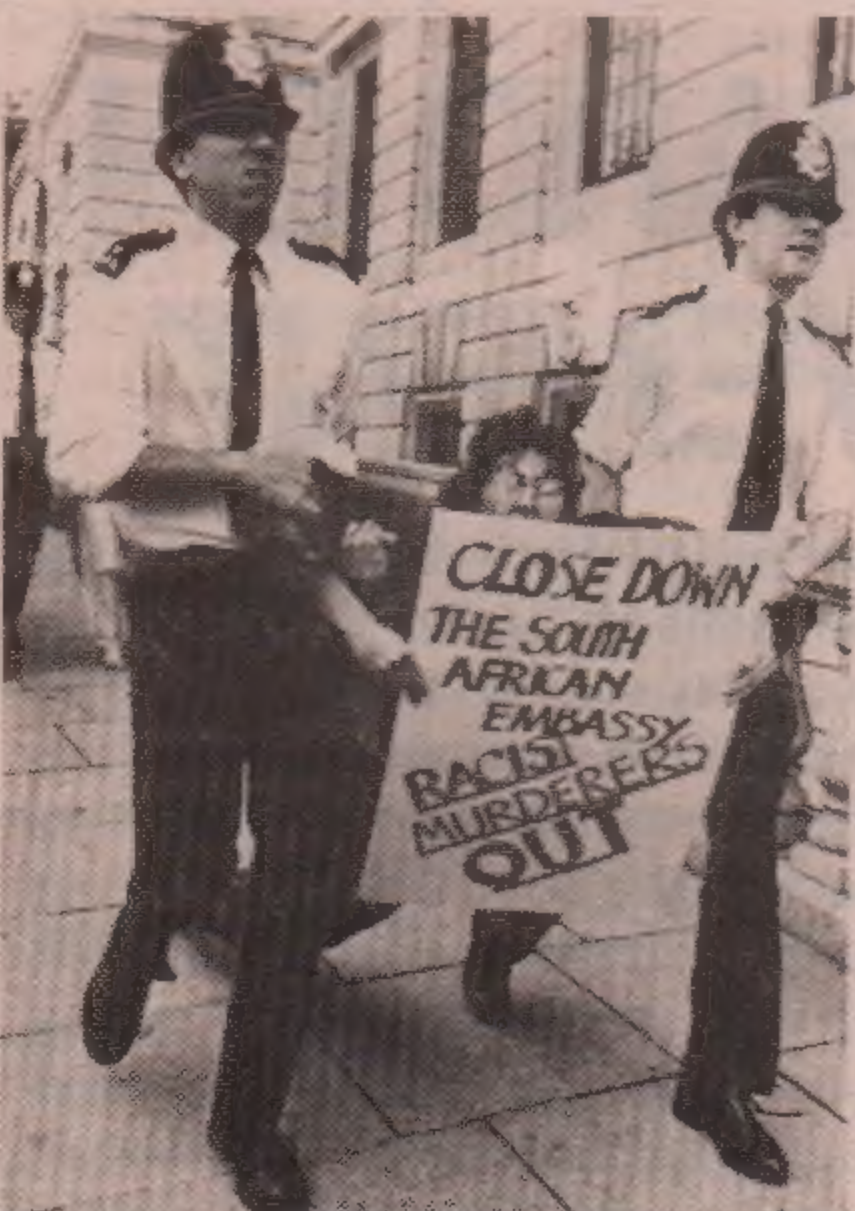
The establishment of the campaign has inspired much other activity. Many people in Manchester are now piling their supermarket trolly up with South African goods, only to refuse to pay for these items at the checkout: sanctions for all. NALGO organised a picket of SAA on an alternate day. Some Moss Side shops have been forced to stop selling South African fruit.

The campaign is going to hold a major rally in October, the pickets are held weekly on Saturdays from 10am to 12 noon, and meetings afterwards. All those interested in joining the campaign please contact MACASAA c/o Raven Press, 75 Piccadilly, Manchester.

ACTION against APARTHEID

Over the last 5 weeks there have been 91 arrests on City of London Anti-Apartheid Group's regular Friday night pickets. The arrests began on 2 August when two women FRFI supporters in City Group chained themselves to the gates of the embassy after other City Group members had placed flowers on the gates in memory of Victoria Mxenge who was murdered by an apartheid murder squad on the previous day. Since the introduction of the State of Emergency, as the black people of South Africa have courageously deepened their resistance, the protests outside the embassy on Friday nights have grown to over 300 as British people have become angry at the terror unleashed in South Africa, and the intransigent stand of the British government.

Every Friday since the beginning of June City Group members have placed flowers at the embassy gates and then stood back to sing and demonstrate, before returning to the picket. The police have now made the area in front of the embassy gates a forbidden area and have restricted the number of people able to lay flowers at one time to three. The bogus reason for this restriction is that the embassy gates must be kept clear for the use of the ambassador and his staff - despite the obvious fact that the gates are locked and barred at the time of the picket because the embassy is closed. Instead of allowing the protests to be made outside the gates the police argue that the picket should be divided into two halves, and as the numbers grow that picketers will have to go over to the other side of Duncannon Street and over to Trafalgar Square. FRFI readers will remember that the police attempted and failed to ban demonstrations on the pavement last summer.



The picketers quite rightly argue that the terror and torture unleashed on the South African people necessitates open and vociferous campaigning against the regime and against British collaboration with it. The racist embassy has no right to peace, dignity or even existence. It should be closed down and all diplomatic links should be ended until South Africa is governed by the majority of its people. Despite the police attempts to prevent effective demonstrations, the picketers have ignored the police ruling, placed flowers and demonstrated outside the embassy gates. As Oliver Tambo said of the demonstrations and arrests outside embassies and consulates in the USA,

'Daily you are getting arrested, daily we are getting arrested. There could hardly be a better way of demonstrating your solidarity.'

ARRESTS ROUND BRITAIN

Opposition to apartheid means conflict with British interests. Activists face arrest, assault, imprisonment. Over 100 people have been arrested on the City Group protests and other events. Others have been arrested in other parts of London, in Glasgow, Edinburgh and elsewhere. FRFI 51 covered the arrest of Helen, an FRFI supporter in Edinburgh; since then, three FRFI activists have been arrested in Islington, flyposting for the City Group demonstration. They were held for 22 hours, their houses were searched and personal belongings taken away for 'forensic tests'. Police were hoping to pin every single postering and spray-paint job in Islington on the three. A picket of Barclays bank in Brixton by another group of activists was attacked by police and one woman assaulted and arrested; the same thing happened at a Barclays picket in Stamford Hill. Women who managed to make a protest inside the embassy on Thursday 29 August were held overnight without food before appearing in court. In Glasgow, two FRFI members were arrested and charged for flyposting. Zola Budd protests - which have effectively forced this media-darling to run secretly - have also led to arrests in Edinburgh and at Crystal Palace.

So far the 91 arrests have resulted in charges ranging from obstruction of the highway, obstruction of the police, and in one case threatening behaviour. The majority of those arrested have been women, with 20 women arrested on South African Women's Day. Both the Mayor and Mayoress of Haringey, staunch anti-apartheid campaigners, have been arrested along with two Labour councillors from North Westminster.

Every Friday, after the arrests most of the picketers march down to the police station to protest outside until all those arrested are released. The defendants have now set up a defence campaign - called Action Against Apartheid Defence Campaign - which all those arrested for campaigning against apartheid are welcome to join.

The police have stated that they intend to pursue the prosecutions against all those charged, despite the fact that a Bow Street magistrate has ruled that there will be a test case on 20 September. The police hope that this pernicious behaviour will quell the militancy and determination of the picketers. But as long as apartheid rules in South Africa, City Group is pledged to continue its protests, so the number of arrests over the coming period will grow as long as the police continue to protect the racists.

So far the British media has aided and abetted the police and the racist embassy. Despite being informed of the

SMASH APARTHEID!



Above Auriel and Simone chained to the Embassy gates

Below Whose Obstruction? Police Obstruction! The Mayor and Mayoress of Haringey 'obstructing the highway' with other demonstrators, while the police obstruct the Embassy gates with their banner



arrests outside the embassy and the protest march on Saturday 24 August they have maintained a wall of silence about protests in Britain. Despite this censorship, whether voluntary or imposed, it is clear that a major campaign has to be built in Britain over the coming months which will expose all support for apartheid, and give solidarity to the South African people in struggle. That movement has to be built out on the street, with the people who will confront British imperialism and racism wherever it thrives. FRFI asks all its readers and supporters to:

Support the court pickets

20 September: Bow Street Magistrates Court, 9.45 am

Test case of Althea on charges of obstruction of the highway

24 September: Horseferry Road Magistrates Court, 9.45am and

1 October: Bow Street Magistrates Court, 9.45am

Remainder of the cases charged with Althea on 9 August outside South Africa House.

For up-to-date information on court pickets please phone City Group on 01-837 6050.

The court cases will continue throughout October. Money is urgently needed for the defence campaign: donations should be sent to AAADC, c/o BM City AA London WC1N 3XX

SUPPORT THE PICKETS OUTSIDE SOUTH AFRICA HOUSE

Every Friday City Group continues its regular pickets from 5.30-7.30pm. We urge you to come along and make these the biggest demonstrations ever seen against apartheid.

THE TIME TO FIGHT APARTHEID IS NOW!

URGENT ANYONE WISHING TO BECOME INVOLVED IN ACTIVITIES AGAINST APARTHEID THROUGHOUT BRITAIN SHOULD CONTACT FRFI FOR UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION: 01 837 1688



POLICE ATTACK COURT PICKET

Plainclothes police ran amok, assaulting a peaceful picket of Bow Street Magistrates Court on Thursday 29 August. The picket was in support of Auriel and Simone who had been charged for chaining themselves to the gates of the South African Embassy in protest at the regime's murder of Victoria Mxenge.

As soon as the picket started uniformed police led by Inspector Bucknell agreed that the protest could take place and that he would ask for less noise if the magistrates complained. Half an hour later, two plainclothes police thugs grabbed hold of Ken who was leading the chanting on a megaphone and began to drag him towards the court, refusing to show their ID or to explain their actions. Ken is blind.

Uniformed police ran up and began to assist their colleagues - grabbing Ken and assaulting and grabbing hold of other picketers who were trying to get an explanation before allowing them to kidnap Ken. Auriel was thrown to the pavement and arrested along with three others.

Ken, meanwhile, had been dragged into court and then set free by the magistrate who had only wanted to request that the picket was quieter so that he could hear the witnesses in the case he was trying. At the door of the court, out of sight of the magistrate, Ken was set on again by the police and shoved in the cells with the others.

Auriel had to be got from the cells by her barrister for her appearance. She and Simone were remanded on bail, but Auriel was then returned to the cells.

We picketed the police station for three hours until our comrades were released - all five were charged with obstructing the police in the course of their duty. Our two black comrades were the first arrested and the last to be released.

What is the police's duty? Abusing, assaulting, repressing and attacking peaceful protesters, apparently!

RCP COUNTER PICKET

On Saturday 27 July the Trotskyist Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP), for the first time in their history, turned up over 100-strong to an AAM/ANC picket of the South African Embassy. They came to attack the ANC, the call for sanctions – and any 'un-British' activity on the event! FRFI and City AA activists ensured that they did not succeed by lending the AAM/ANC our megaphone and using our stewards and singers to drown out their counter demonstration.

If their behaviour on the day was not arrogant and chauvinist enough their comments later convict them totally. They boasted that they had 'made the picket' by 'putting a stop to all the bongo drums': the singing and instruments of ANC and other protesters, who included a group 'Asians Against Apartheid' as well as City Group singers. These racists from the RCP have not been seen on a picket since.

EDINBURGH UNITED AGAINST APARTHEID

EDINBURGH UNITED AGAINST APARTHEID

Speeches from a rally against British collaboration with Apartheid, Summer '85

Published by Rally Against Apartheid Organising Committee (RAAPOC) c/o 11 Forth Street, Edinburgh. Price 50p.

This pamphlet is a record of a historic rally against apartheid that took place in Edinburgh, 21 June 1985. Communists, Chilean refugees, peace activists, anti-racist activists and Labour party members joined together on a platform with David Kitson, ex South African political prisoner, to give their support to the movement against apartheid. The rally was organised to show the breadth of support there is in Britain for the liberation struggle in Southern Africa and to aid the building of a movement against apartheid's backers in Britain.

Speakers at the rally, some of whom are involved in campaigns against racism, and in the peace movement, stressed that the issue of apartheid is one that involves all of us and can't be separated from our own struggle at home. Soss, who spoke for Edinburgh Women's Action For Peace, told the rally that, 'The last 12-18 months at Greenham Common have seen an evolving consciousness about the links between different struggles...' Viraj Mendis who is threatened with deportation spoke for the Viraj Mendis Defence Campaign and was very clear about the need to fight racism in South Africa and in Britain, 'The struggle against racism in this country and the struggle against apartheid is one struggle against one enemy, British imperialism.'

Carol Brickley who spoke for FRFI emphasised the need to build an open, democratic movement against apartheid that will involve the youth, the unemployed, black people, everybody who is opposed to apartheid.

The main speaker of the night was David Kitson who spent 20 years in jail in South Africa as a political prisoner. He told the rally that the situation in Britain was becoming more like that in South Africa with the use of more and more repressive legislation to attack peoples democratic rights here. He called on us to build a 'grassroots movement against British collaboration with apartheid.'

The breadth of support for an end to British collaboration with apartheid as illustrated in this pamphlet is the basis for such a grassroots movement against apartheid that will confront racism in Britain as well as in South Africa.

Loma Morgan

Apologies to Edinburgh Women's Action for Peace who were not included in our report in the last issue of FRFI, about the Edinburgh rally.

Fighting to change the AAM

On Saturday 24 August after the 1,000-strong march and rally, delegates gathered from around Britain to discuss the way forward for anti-apartheid work in Britain. City Group convened the meeting and invited delegates and representatives from several organisations to share views and experiences and try to agree a common strategy in building far more effective protest.

The issue is the fight for a democratic, representative and mass anti-apartheid movement and how best the case for this change could be put at the AAM's Annual General Meeting in Sheffield this year.

Delegates attended from Bradford and Dundee AA groups, Sheffield Asian Youth Movement, Yorkshire Campaign Against Apartheid, GLC Nalگو, Southall Black Women's Centre, Gays and Lesbians Against Apartheid, Imperialism and Racism, Islington Rally Against Apartheid and, of course, FRFI/RCG. A wider range of organisations are to be sent the minutes of the meeting. The meeting discussed a report and assessment given by Carol Brickley, Convenor of City Group, of the history of City Group and of its clash with the leadership of the AAM which had led to its expulsion earlier this year from the national movement. The need for unity, democracy and far more effective action in the AAM was agreed. Carol spelled out City AA's determination that racism in Britain *had* to be an issue for any real anti-apartheid movement, and cited the movements in New Zealand and the USA as an example of the power which can be unleashed by anti-apartheid groups making this obvious connection: power to really shift attitudes to both racism at home and collaboration with apartheid. An anti-apartheid movement must be an anti-racist movement. The delegates, many of them black, gave full support to this view. Some had already clashed with the existing AAM unwillingness to take the oppression of black people in Britain seriously. As Mushtaq of Sheffield AYM explained, his local Sheffield AA group felt that inviting a speaker from the government-funded Community Relations Executive gave adequate recognition to black communities in Britain.

On democracy, combating the sectarian bans and censorship in the AAM Kevin, an Islington Labour Party member, lamented the outright hostility of the Islington AA group to the Islington Rally initiative (which they were invited to participate in) and also the insistence of the AAM currently in unconstitutionally interfering in the business of the different liberation movements and organisations of Southern Africa. The meeting agreed that the internationalist position of supporting all recognised liberation movements fighting apartheid was the only correct position for the solidarity movement in Britain.

Decisions

It was agreed that mobilisation of all activists for the AGM in November was important and should be co-ordinated. Last year in an effort to maintain control many inactive people were drafted in by the AAM leadership so that they could win the votes. This year, activists who actually campaign against apartheid have to be there in sufficient numbers to have their say.

It was agreed to meet again in London on Sunday 6 October and that again this meeting would be open to all interested parties. Prior to this public meetings would be called in as many areas as possible to explain and debate the issues.

IMPORTANT DATES

Registration for AGM Attendance by 5pm 27 September

Anyone registering after that date or trying to register on the day will only be allowed in if there is space in the hall.

If you want accommodation arranged in the home of a Sheffield AA member you must register by 5pm on 6 September.

Resolutions (max length 250 words) by 5pm 16 September

Nominations for National Committee by 5pm 16 September (and for Standing Orders Committee in charge of next year's AGM)

Nominations for scrutineers and tellers by 5pm 14 October.

Amendments to motions by 5pm 14 October

Attendance is of course limited to those with current AA membership. National Committee candidates must have been members of the AAM from 28 October '84 and must be paid up to date on receipt of nomination. All correspondence, nominations, resolutions, applications for membership to: AGM, Anti-Apartheid Movement, 13 Mandela Street, London NW1 0DW.

For more information on the City Group meetings and the mobilisation for the AGM write to: BM City AA, London WC1N 3XX or phone 01-837 6050, or to: FRFI, BCM Box 5909, London WC1N 3XX or phone 01-837 1688

Transport from London – City Group hopes to take people from London at a cost of approximately £10-12 and can also make accommodation arrangements.

A DEAD HAND ON THE MOVEMENT

Why should Dominic Tweedie, a prominent member of the AAM, take it upon himself to harangue FRFI comrades for daring to sell FRFI on an AAM picket when he himself was openly selling the *Morning Star*? Why should two CPGB members in Bradford suddenly pitch up at a meeting of Bradford AA Group, not to offer their party's support for the work the group is doing, but to lecture the active group members on why they should have nothing to do with the newly-formed Yorkshire Campaign Against Apartheid? Why should a group of people, including CPGB *Morning Star* supporters, pack a meeting of Harrogate AA Group to condemn a very successful party for David Kitson on the eve of the National Demonstration in June, overturn the agenda and elect new officers?

Why should the CPGB-run AAM in Scotland suddenly begin to mobilise every possible person they can to attend local group meetings in Edinburgh and Glasgow? Certainly not so that they can be won to activity, for the AA/CPGB turn out on their own activities is usually about four. All these events are occurring because the CPGB has launched its own political campaign against activists within the AAM. In particular this campaign is directed against FRFI, but anyone who proposes anything which goes beyond the CPGB's narrow view of activity will come under attack.

The CPGB, and in particular the breakaway *Morning Star* wing, has been in the driving seat of the AAM since its inception, along with their favoured political allies in the Labour and trade

union 'left'. There would be nothing wrong with this domination if in fact the AAM had thrived on the politics of 'Great' Britain's reformist communist party. But it quite clearly has not thrived. Faced with the massive escalation of the struggle in South Africa over the last months, which has made apartheid front-page news in every country in the world, the British AAM has not been able to move Thatcher one inch from her intransigent support for Botha's regime. As thousands protest in the United States, France, New Zealand, Germany and many other places – forcing their governments to at least token action and protest against the regime – the British movement's weakness is very clear. No major mobilisation has taken place since the State of Emergency was

declared nearly two months ago.

The CPGB, in a thoroughly bourgeois way, has concentrated its energies over the years on work in very limited circles within the Labour Party and trade union bureaucracy and church, rather than on building up the movement in the local areas. There is no doubt that a movement *does* have to do this kind of work – but to do it *instead* of promoting the kind of active local work which is the basis of any movement's existence is wrong. To go further and actively strive to limit local activists to only the kind of work acceptable to these people is suicide! Nothing is acceptable to political opportunists until they are forced to swallow it – no government, archbishop or trade union will be impelled to act unless there are literally thousands of voices raised demanding action in no uncertain terms!

You will now be asking why the CPGB, who have the same ambitions for size and power as any political party, should object to heading a much larger movement if this is possible? The answer is that the only way the movement against apartheid in Britain is going to be a mass movement is by opening its ranks to the oppressed and militant sections of society here: black people, youth, communists, anti-racists, punks, anarchists, unemployed, militant peace campaigners. And the CPGB does not want these forces mobilised because it has no influence over them.

A party which supports the British presence in Ireland; which has called for more police in the black areas of our cities; which condemned the 'violence' of striking miners, and of the mainly black youth who took to the streets against Britain's racist police; which supports immigration controls; is not going to have much credibility amongst black activists, Greenham women, young unemployed, or those with no choice but to challenge the British state. In a broad active and democratic movement the CPGB and their fellow travellers would lose their leading positions to those who are prepared to really challenge British collaboration with apartheid. This is the spectre which is haunting the CPGB. A broad, active and democratic movement is what FRFI is fighting for.

Maggie Mellon

Larkin publications

Order from Larkin Publications
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Ireland: the key to the British Revolution
David Reed

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The revolutionary road to communism in Britain
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170pp £1.50 plus 45p p&p

South Africa: Britain Out of Apartheid, Apartheid Out of Britain

Carol Brickley, Terry O'Halloran and David Reed

56pp £0.95 plus 28p p&p

Miners Strike 1984 – 85
People versus State

David Reed and Olivia Adamson

144pp £2.50 plus 40p p&p



BUDD ON THE RUN

On Monday 26 August Zola Budd broke the world 5,000 metres record in front of a half-empty stadium at Crystal Palace. The organisers of the event had refused to advertise her world record bid – why? For fear that anti-apartheid protesters would demonstrate against her presence. They were quite right to be worried. The last time Budd ran at Crystal Palace, City of London Anti-Apartheid Group protesters attempted to disrupt the race. Two members managed to get onto the track and the police had to draft in police who normally guard the embassy on Friday nights in order to identify possible demonstrators.



POLICE FILE

● The chief constable of South Wales, Mr David East, has resigned as a vice-president of the Crayshaw's invitation rugby team which is touring South Africa (admirable, Mr East) because he fears that his force could be accused of not being independent in dealing with anti-apartheid demonstrations. Mr East's colleagues at South Africa House have kicked his good intentions into touch.

● It was a most remarkable thing that PC John Chester, the killer of five-year-old John Shorthouse, was found to be the winner of an award for bravery. Even more remarkable that the gutter tabloids discovered the fact unaided and splashed pictures of the brave handsome man all over their front pages. Cynics, amongst whom we do not number ourselves, will be thinking that this is an attempt by West Midlands police to deflect criticism and gain sympathy for the poor unfortunate, the killer who pulled the trigger.

● Eight years ago William Stirling served a prison sentence and was released on parole. On the last day of his parole his probation officer could not contact him, and, assuming he had moved without informing him, the officer revoked the parole order as a formality until contact was restored. In June, eight years later, Mr Stirling's name appeared in the Police Gazette as a wanted man. He was arrested and immediately thrown into prison, without trial, for 30 days for failing to report to a probation officer on one day in 1977. Only a writ of Habeas Corpus by his solicitor obtained Mr Stirling's release, on unconditional bail.

● Two soldiers, confusing the sleepy inhabitants of Moreton-in-Marsh for Irish citizens or other undesirable elements, fired a smoke grenade and a rocket flare into a crowded restaurant in the small Cotswold town. The grenade narrowly missed one customer and filled the restaurant with acrid fumes. For the soldiers, who had been thrown out of the restaurant an hour earlier for 'rowdiness', this was their revenge. The two have been charged with possessing without permission a 'weapon designed for the discharge of a noxious thing'. The army authorities are musing about the security of their armoured and the conduct of their noxious squaddies.

● Another casualty of the miners' strike. Sergeant Michael Schmidt, 36, of the Hampshire police forged a witness' signature on a court exhibit label, because of pressure of work, he said, while other men were away on picket line duty. He received a nine month gaol sentence. We wonder if this is normal police/court practice?

● Have you heard the one about the riot in Toxteth? Unlikely. Kenneth Oxford is trying to keep it to himself.

After the incident was out (local youth implanting railings in local police cars) Fred Leyland of Merseyside Police Federation was moved to comment: 'We are very concerned about the number of attacks. Policemen are being attacked as they walk down the street, just because they are policemen (!) I appeal to the people of Liverpool 8 to give us more co-operation. Talk of us being oppressive is just not true.' Reporters could not help but notice the railing impaled in Mr Leyland's head.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

The State of the Unions

The spectre of the year long miners' strike continues to haunt the leaders of the Labour Party and the TUC. They simply cannot understand why Scargill, the target of vile attacks from left, right and centre, remains unbowed, unbeaten and unrepentant. Despite the shift to the right and the setbacks following the end of the strike, they still have not managed to completely cover up the split opened up by Scargill's politics. Scargill and Heathfield are still greeted with adulation in the mining communities and by thousands of others. It is Kinnock who is forced to appear smiling on Scargill's platform, and not vice versa.

The miners' strike again threatens to split the TUC and Labour Party conferences this month. Kinnock and Willis are doing all they can to stop an NUM motion calling on a future Labour government to review the cases of all miners gaoled in the strike. The TUC General Council even wants to reject a weaker amendment put down by the NCU, as they object to a review for cases involving 'violence'. The NUM are refusing to withdraw their motion while TUC leaders hypocritically hide behind a resolution from the rail unions, praising the miners for their 'heroic struggle'. An insult indeed to those in gaol for fighting for their class.

Scabbing on the miners once more, Kinnock and Willis prefer to scabble with the SDP, Liberals and Tories to win over the votes of the middle classes and more privileged sections of the working class who have had enough of Thatcher. The Labour leaders' latest offering in this direction is the sickeningly entitled 'A New Partnership—A New Britain'—a joint Labour Party/TUC document

which does not mention the word 'socialism' once. It is a vague programme whose main themes are the need to 'get Britain back to work' through a public investment programme, to devise some kind of income policy under the guise of 'fair wages for all'. Finally, barely disguised beneath Kinnock-ese jargon about 'positive legislation' for trade unions, comes Kinnock's firm intention to retain the Tories' compulsory ballots if a Labour government is re-elected. The purpose of this document is to present the Labour Party as a credible alternative to the Tories—last time's election manifesto is seen as being much too extreme—hence no mention of the word 'socialism'.

The TUC Conference begins on 2 September and the question of unions taking state cash for ballots is posing the possibility of an embarrassing right wing split. The engineers' union, the AUEW, with one million members, has already pocketed £1.2 million after a resounding 12-1 vote in favour of its members. The

right wing EETPU is also in the process of asking for £320,000. Strict adherence to TUC policy would mean the expulsion of the AUEW. Compromises are urgently being sought, but the AUEW has already rejected paying the money into a special fund. On 29 August the TUC General Council ordered the union to 'discontinue such activities forthwith and undertake not to engage therein in the future'. While the AUEW is already committed to a further ballot in the autumn which will clearly state that to take government money risks expulsion from the TUC, it seems unlikely that, given the previous majority, the AUEW leaders will back down at the Conference.

After the miners' strike the right has begun to take on a more organised form in the TUC. Engineering leader Terry Duffy now heads a right-wing grouping called 'Mainstream'; representatives from the EETPU and David Prendergast of the Notts scab union are also prominent. Interestingly, Ken Gill, head of the TASS section of the AUEW, and recently expelled from the CPGB as a 'hardliner' by the Eurocommunist wing, opposes the expulsion of the AUEW. In this his position is identical to that of the Eurocommunists who are now urging adaptation to the right wingers on the question of ballots.

However, despite this growing collusion of right and 'left', Willis is going to find it difficult, after the disastrous NUR ballot, to reconcile more militant delegates with some form of compromise which can prevent the AUEW's expulsion.

Olivia Adamson

Ballot leaves 245 sacked

11,000 railway guards have voted 52% to 48% against taking industrial action over British Rail's attempt to force through driver-only trains. Prior to the ballot, British Rail sacked 245 guards in Scotland, Wales and Yorkshire for taking unofficial action and threatened to shut down the whole rail network in the event of a strike. The men now remain sacked and British Rail is refusing even to discuss their position until their programme is adopted.

British Rail lost £408 million last year, over half due to the miners' strike. Driver-only trains are central to the plans to increase productivity (even though productivity in Britain is second highest amongst eight leading European nations), in an attempt to win back freight from road transport. Under British Rail's plans 1,760 guards will go over five years, with a saving of £17 million. British Rail has been trying to introduce one-person trains since 1981 but has seized the opportunity of the end of the miners' strike to force the issue this time, using hardline tactics.

NUR policy is to oppose driver-only trains, not only to preserve jobs, but on grounds of safety. Their policy is now in tatters. Before the ballot, solidarity action by guards and other rail workers took place in a number of areas, but this action was unofficial. The NUR chose to abide by Tory anti-union laws which make ballots compulsory before official action can take place. The ballot result is a victory for Tory 'democracy'. Guards whose jobs are not immediately threatened and those who are not prepared to lose redundancy payments and pension rights by being sacked (2,000 guards are over 55 years old), were prepared to sell out those sacked and those whose jobs are to go immediately. While British Rail has talked of no compulsory redundancies, the ballot result means that they will be able to redefine guards' duties at will, introduce one-person trains, and, of course, in an atmosphere of demoralisation, encourage mass voluntary redundancies from those prepared to sell their jobs.

NUR leader Jimmy Knapp and the NUR Executive claimed to be confident over the ballot result but must have had doubts, given the failed tube strike earlier this year when London Transport NUR members simply ignored their strike call. ASLEF did not come out in support of the guards, but are now threatening action over lack of security measures on driver-only freight trains. Unlike what happened in the miners' strike, where there was no ballot, the split in the NUR between those prepared to fight and those unwilling to do so, has ended in rapid defeat. In Glasgow, where 138 men have been sacked, guards are still on strike, but in Immingham and South Wales, things look set to return 'to normal' with the issue of the sacked men still unresolved.

Olivia Adamson and Bob Shepherd

The killing of John Shorthouse

On Saturday 24 August at 6 am four armed police officers broke down the front door of the Shorthouse family's house in Kings Norton, Birmingham to arrest the father John. Forty minutes later, his eldest son, John, aged five, was certified dead at Selly Oak Hospital. He died of fatal gunshot wounds to his chest received from PC Chester's revolver.

Police say that John's death was caused when PC Chester's gun discharged accidentally as he was searching under the little boy's bed. They say that they were unaware that the child was in the bed and thought his body was a 'bundle of rags'. The gun, a .357 Magnum has no safety catch and is the most powerful hand gun available. Britain is the only European country to issue such a powerful weapon which is the most difficult hand gun to control. In the US the gun is known as the 'grizzly bear killer'.

West Midlands police have a record of 'making mistakes' using guns. In 1980 armed officers shot and killed a 16 year old pregnant woman, Gail Kinchen, during a siege in Rubery, Birmingham. In 1982 armed police smashed down the front door of a flat belonging to three pensioners. They were held at gunpoint whilst being questioned until their innocence was established.

Despite this catalogue of disasters, West Midlands police have not changed their firearms policy and the police committee blamed media sensationalism for the public outcry. Police 'mistakes' however continued, culminating in 1983 with the shooting of Stephen Waldorf in Kensington. At the time of the shooting, senior Metropolitan Police Officer, Geoffrey Dear said that Metropolitan police arms training is 'well ahead of anything else'. Dear is now Chief Constable of the West Midlands police.

John Shorthouse senior, (unemployed) had been remanded in custody with two other men, charged with the armed robbery of £180 and two cheques. No weapon was found during the raid on his house. PC Chester, on the other hand, has been suspended on full pay whilst an 'inquiry' into the shooting is carried out by the Police Complaints Board. The media made much of the 'shock' suffered by PC Chester. No mention has been made of the devastation facing the Shorthouse family—John junior dead, John senior imprisoned; Jacqueline Shorthouse and her two other children (4 and 2) left to cope alone. It has now been announced that it is not intended to make public the results of the police enquiry. This so-called accidental shooting is the inevitable result of increased use by the police of guns and the green light given to police gun tuggery by the Waldorf shooting.

Alexa Byrne

The right to inequality

Summer has seen a minor victory for thousands of youth forced into a rootless and homeless existence by Tory changes in DHSS board and lodging rules. Social Security Minister Fowler's regulations of 29 April, which compelled 85,000 under-26s to move on after 2, 4 or 8 weeks in lodgings were ruled illegal by the High Court—on the grounds that Fowler had no power to rewrite rules without parliament. Such is the arrogance of this regime that even the normally servile judiciary was obliged to remind it of the law, and some benefit will be repaid.

However, few claimants will be dancing in the streets onto which they were so recently thrown. Firstly, the misery and the suicides cannot be undone. Secondly, while time limits were ruled illegal, savage cuts in payment rates, which make much accommodation unaffordable, still apply to claimants of all ages. Thirdly, Thatcher insists that 'Some action is needed to control this area of social security expenditure.' She describes Fowler's neglect of parliament and the Social Security Advisory Committee as a 'technical point'—thus indicating that the Tories will reintroduce similar measures by any means possible. Meanwhile, Fowler is reportedly 'studying' a proposal which will cut vital lump sum payments to claimants by more than half, saving £120 million.

The Tories will soon continue the conscription of youth into a sweatshop economy, by enacting their 1985 budget proposals to end Wages Council protection for workers under 21. Half a million—1 in five—of Britain's lowest paid young workers will lose cover. (Un)employment Minister King feels rates are 'fixed far too high'—at £52-£63 for 17 year olds. For those over 21, Wages Councils will be limited to setting hourly and overtime rates, and will no longer be allowed to regulate holiday, shift, weekend or short-time pay. Some employers will be able to opt out of the Statutory Sick Pay scheme, and the period before unfair dismissal can be claimed will be doubled to 2 years.

King will however create 100 new jobs—by increasing Department of Employment 'fraud' squads by 25%!

Those who run the machinery of state repression have had a profitable summer: well rewarded for services rendered. For-

mer employers of NCB chairman MacGregor, bankers Lazard Freres, received a bonus of nearly £1 million in gratitude for his performance. Top civil servants, military chiefs and judges got massive rises—the pay of Sir Robert Anthony, Head of the Civil Service, rose 48% to £75,000. While senior officers in the armed forces got 17.6%, nurses were offered 5.6% and teachers 6%.

In August, Thatcher bought a £400,000 high security Barratt home, and her government ordered the NHS to sell off nurses' homes: putting 35,000 nurses at risk of eviction. A court case revealed that Tower Hamlets houses 500 families, nearly all Asian, in B&B hotels like the 'Cleopatra' in Bayswater—where 300 guests share 7 gas rings and a health inspector found the filthy and verminous firetrap 'a statutory nuisance', under the 1936 Public Health Act. As Thatcher says, 'The right to be unequal...'

Dave Burton

IRELAND: THE KEY TO THE BRITISH REVOLUTION

Iris review

Iris is a Sinn Féin quarterly publication. The review below was written by G McAteer

WRITING to Frederick Engels in December 1869, Karl Marx commented that 'deeper study' of the Irish question had convinced him that "the English working class will never accomplish anything before it has got rid of Ireland. The lever must be applied in Ireland. That is why the Irish question is so important for the social movement in general."

In so writing, Marx was echoing his earlier sentiments that 'a nation which enslaves another cannot itself be free.' It's a view which David Reed believes to be as relevant today as it was when Marx put pen to paper, and it is that view which forms the kernel of the argument in *Ireland: the key to the British revolution*. Based on a series of no less than seventeen articles originally published in *Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!* (the paper of the Revolutionary Communist Group in Britain), this hefty volume examines the history of the Irish struggle from the 1840s to the present, concentrating however on the current phase from 1968 to 1983.

Right from the outset, David Reed lays his political cards firmly on the table, declaring that he fully supports the Republican Movement as the revolutionary inheritors of the republican tradition.

However the main thrust of his book is not to provide a history of the Irish struggle, but to examine the revolutionary implications of this struggle for the British working class. Predictably, Reed's findings in that respect are gloomy. He maintains that the British working class and their political and trade union representatives have consistently failed to make 'common cause' with the Irish struggle, and by so doing have not only held back Irish self-determination but also have fatally undermined the struggle for socialism in Britain.

Since Reed's supposition about the dependence of British socialism on withdrawal from Ireland is surely correct, then it follows that the sooner this comes about the better both for the British and Irish working classes. It would therefore seem logical to republicans that the role of British socialists is to build on whatever support there is in Britain for a withdrawal, so that a broad-based climate of opinion will develop which supports disengagement from Ireland. But this is where David Reed fundamentally differs, not just from this reviewer but from the perspectives adopted by most socialist organisations in Britain itself.

Using support for the Irish struggle as a litmus test on which to judge the political credentials of British socialists, Reed proceeds to lambast virtually every left-wing group in Britain and those individuals within the Labour Party and elsewhere who are attempting to raise the issue of a British withdrawal. His impatience with such groups and individuals stems from their ambivalence or indeed opposition to the IRA's armed struggle.

While of course the optimum position would be that the British working class and their representatives understood and supported the Republican Movement, this is a totally unrealistic expectation given the political situation for the foreseeable future. Republicans cannot afford the luxury of waiting around until the British working class becomes sufficiently politicised to fully support our struggle in all its forms. We must encourage, pragmatically, any willingness – for whatever reason it comes and from whatever quarter – to withdraw from Ireland. Whether from a left-wing IRA supporter, or from a Liberal who believes the British government has spent too much in Ireland, or from a Tory whose will has been broken by the bombing in Brighton.

Reed's insistence that only mobilisation on an RCG political programme can bring about British withdrawal is an isolationist stance that is doomed to obscurity. His contempt for other political groups is hardly conducive to the building of a groundswell of support for British withdrawal. This same antagonism may well cause the book to be dismissed out of hand by most members of the British working class, at whom it is aimed.

Reprinted from *Iris* No 10 July 1985

RCG reply

As we go to press this letter has not been published
The Editor 22 July 1985
An Phoblacht/Republican News
51/53 Falls Road
Belfast

Dear Sir

I am writing in response to G McAteer's review of my book *Ireland: the key to the British revolution in Iris* (No 10 July 1985). The review unfortunately gives a false picture to Irish readers of the political argument of the Revolutionary Communist Group (RCG) on the crucial question of how to build an Irish solidarity movement in Britain.

G McAteer claims that the RCG insists that 'only mobilisation on an RCG political programme can bring about British withdrawal' and he further implies that the RCG is opposed to working with all trends and individuals, socialist and non-socialist prepared to oppose the British presence in Ireland. This is simply not true. RCG comrades working in the Irish Solidarity Movement (ISM) have consistently campaigned for unity in action on the Irish question. It was our trend which supported the call by Albany Irish POWs in 1983 for a united solidarity movement and initiated a unity campaign culminating in a demonstration and conference in 1983. This campaign founded on the sectarian refusal of other solidarity organisations to take part. When Ken Livingstone was attacked for speaking out on Ireland, the ISM publicly defended his right to speak. During the miners' strike ISM supporters worked to form links with the striking miners. This resulted in an historic ISM conference in 1984 when the then recently released Irish POW John McCluskey clasped hands with Kent miners' leader Malcolm Pitt on a public platform, which I was proud to share. Finally the ISM is today working with others in the Maire O'Shea defence campaign.

Where we differ with others in Britain and possibly with G McAteer is in our belief that a strong and effective solidarity movement must be based on the most oppressed sections of the working class who have nothing to lose but everything to gain from the victory of the Irish revolution. Far from ruling out alliances with other less reliable forces this offers a solid foundation for building effective campaigning alliances with them. History confirms this view. What have those who have based themselves on the official Labour Party and trade union movement and other less reliable forces produced over the last 15 years in Britain? The honest answer is nothing. And with the Labour Party today moving rapidly to the right it should be obvious that a new approach is required. Neil Kinnock has recently demonstrated his slavish loyalty to British imperialism by rejecting out of hand Tony Benn's amnesty bill for imprisoned miners, while congratulating the police on breaking a so-called IRA 'summer bombing campaign'. The Irish people can expect nothing from a movement led by such a man. Those who disagree with this have yet to produce any tangible evidence for their point of view.

The best summary of the RCG's real position on building a solidarity movement was given at the founding conference of the ISM in November 1982,

'While an Irish solidarity movement itself would be based on those forces who fully support the anti-imperialist position on Ireland, it would also work with other organisations and individuals who supported, for example, the abolition of plastic bullets... this would include, for example, members of the Labour Party and individual MPs... The Irish solidarity movement would, of course, be fighting to win all those it works with, in whatever campaign, to the anti-imperialist position on Ireland without making this a condition for working with them.'

Finally, neither the RCG nor the ISM demands support for the armed struggle of the IRA as a precondition for united work. Yours fraternally
David Reed

cc The Editor, An Phoblacht/
Republican News, 44 Parnell
Square, Dublin 1
The Editor, *Iris*, 44 Parnell Square
Dublin 1



Who are the friends of the oppressed?

The 1981 hunger strike campaign in Britain (left) turned its back on the new revolutionary forces which arose in Liverpool (right), Brixton, and elsewhere. The miners' strike (middle right) showed that real possibilities for building an effective anti-imperialist movement exist in Britain. But to expect the Labour movement under Kinnock (far right) to be won to a progressive position on Ireland is 'totally unrealistic'.



Communists

As communists in the world's oldest imperialist nation, the Revolutionary Communist Group (RCG) has consistently fought long and bitter struggles with the British left to establish the communist position of unconditional support for the struggle of national liberation movements against British imperialist domination and against national oppression. Our record on this, especially in relation to Ireland, is beyond serious challenge. In Britain, with its long tradition of imperialist exploitation, its strong and well entrenched labour aristocracy, communists have always had to emphasise the goal we have in common with the national liberation movements – the defeat of British imperialism.

As the crisis of British imperialism has deepened, with the consequent polarisation of British class society, and as the tempo of the national liberation struggles themselves has accelerated (Ireland 1981, South Africa 1984-5) inevitably the issue of the relationship between communists and national liberation movements will present itself in new ways, raising new questions and demanding answers. So today the very same political forces that yesterday accused the RCG of conceding to reactionary nationalism for demanding unconditional support for national struggles against British imperialism and against national oppression, are now flaunting a newly discovered 'solidarity' with liberation movements to justify their own opportunist attempt to sustain the deadly grip of the labour aristocracy over the working class and oppressed in Britain. It is, therefore, necessary to restate the basis of the communist standpoint on the national question.

Lenin and the right of nations to self-determination

Under imperialism the world has been divided into oppressor and oppressed nations and national oppression has been extended and intensified. A split has been created in the working class movement in the imperialist countries. One section, the labour aristocracy, has been corrupted by the 'crumbs that fall from the table' of the imperialist bourgeoisie, obtained from the super-exploitation and brutal oppression of the people from oppressed nations. The other, the mass of the working class, cannot liberate itself without uniting with the movement of oppressed peoples against imperialist domination. Only such an alliance will make it possible to wage a united fight against the imperialist powers, the imperialist bourgeoisie, and their bought-off agents in the working class movement. This means the working class fighting in alliance with national liberation movements to destroy imperialism for the purpose of the socialist revolution.

The unity of all forces against imperialism can only be achieved on the basis of the internationalist principle 'No nation can be free if it oppresses other nations'. This is expressed through the demand of the right of nations to self-determination. This demand recognises that class

solidarity of workers is strengthened by the substitution of voluntary ties between nations for compulsory, militaristic ones. The demand for complete equality between nations, by removing distrust between the workers of the oppressor and oppressed nations, lays the foundation for a united international struggle for the socialist revolution. That is, for the only regime under which complete national equality can be achieved.

While the working class in the oppressed and oppressor nations have the same goal they necessarily approach it by different paths. As Lenin pointed out, the actual conditions of the workers in the oppressed and in the oppressor nations are not the same from the standpoint of national oppression. The struggle of the working class against national oppression has a twofold character:

'(a) first, it is the "action" of the nationally oppressed proletariat and peasantry jointly with the nationally oppressed bourgeoisie against the oppressor nation; (b) second, it is the "action" of the proletariat, or of its class-conscious section, in the oppressor nation against the bourgeoisie of that nation and all the elements that follow it.' (Lenin, 'A caricature of Marxism and imperialist economism'; our emphasis bold)

Lenin was accused of being inconsistent in his attitude to nationalism for arguing that the approach of the working class in the oppressor nation to this question was necessarily different from that of the working class in the oppressed nation. His reply to his critics was simple and direct.

'Is the position of the proletariat with regard to national oppression the same in oppressing and oppressed nations? No, it is not the same, not the same economically, politically, ideologically, spiritually, etc. Meaning?

'Meaning that some will approach in one way, others in another way the same goal... from different starting points.' ('The nascent trend of imperialist economism')

What this means is that the strategy and tactics necessary for building an effective anti-imperialist movement in Britain (the oppressor nation) may differ from the strategy and tactics required to develop the liberation movement's struggle

in the oppressed nation. The RCG has long opposed all attempts by the British Labour movement and the British left to impose their own, usually opportunist, strategy and tactics on the liberation movement. Equally, the RCG is opposed to all attempts to impose the strategy and tactics developed by liberation movements to meet the specific conditions of their own struggles on the anti-imperialist movement in Britain. The example of the Lancaster House negotiations on Zimbabwean independence in 1979 makes this point clear. Communists in Britain defended the right of the Patriotic Front to enter into negotiations with and make concessions to the British government, whilst, at the same time, attacking the British government for imposing these concessions on the liberation movement.

Opportunists hide behind liberation movements

On the question of Ireland and South Africa opportunists are attempting to use Sinn Féin and the ANC to attack the RCG's approach to solidarity work. In a recent leaflet *Proletarian*, a tiny and unimportant group associated with the *Morning Star*, attacks the RCG's work on Ireland using a quote from a review in the Sinn Féin journal *Iris of Ireland, the key to the British revolution*. In the same leaflet it attacks the RCG's involvement



Irish youth behind Bogside barricades



and national liberation movements

SAME GOAL - DIFFERENT PATHS

in City of London Anti-Apartheid Group and demands the disbanding of City AA on the grounds of 'solidarity' with the ANC. Readers should note that *Proletarian* chooses to support the *Morning Star*, a newspaper which is vehemently opposed to the Irish national liberation struggle. This fact alone exposes the cynical and opportunist character of *Proletarian's* solidarity. We cite *Proletarian* only because it is a typical example of the way in which British opportunists use liberation movements for their own narrow sectarian ends.

The review referred to by *Proletarian* appeared in *Iris* No 10 July 1985. The review contains important distortions of the RCG's position on building a movement in Britain. (See review and our reply). More important for our argument here however, is the standpoint stated in the review on solidarity work and the strongly implied attitude of the reviewer that socialists in Britain should adopt the same standpoint. G McAteer accepts our central argument that emancipation of Ireland is a necessary precondition for the socialist revolution in Britain. We are also in agreement that socialists in Britain should 'build on whatever support there is in Britain for a withdrawal'. Where we disagree fundamentally with the reviewer is the assertion that the possibility of building an effective *anti-imperialist* solidarity movement in Britain 'is a totally unreal-

istic expectation given the political situation for the foreseeable future'. On the basis of this the review concludes that the RCG has adopted 'an isolationist stance that is doomed to obscurity' - the very quote seized upon by the truly obscure *Proletarian* sect.

This position ignores the political developments which have taken place in Britain particularly in the last five years. During the crucial period of the hunger strike in 1981 major British cities saw the most significant, intense and widespread street confrontations between the oppressed black and white youth and the police. These were the most serious spontaneous revolts in Britain in the whole post-war period. The possibility of uniting the oppressed in Britain with the Irish people in a common struggle against a common enemy was there for all to see. The opportunity was thrown away precisely because the existing solidarity movement led by the Troops Out Movement turned its back on these developments for fear of disrupting its, in any case, futile attempt to win the official Labour movement to support the hunger strike. Rather than appeal to a section of the working class which had a common interest with the Irish people in defeating the Thatcher government and was actually fighting that government on the streets, the existing solidarity movement adapted its campaign to avoid any exposure of its chosen allies in

the Labour Party: the very people who, in government, were responsible for the hunger strike - by withdrawing Special Category Status for political prisoners in 1976 - and who viciously condemned the risings in Britain.

The miners' strike 1984-5 once again demonstrated that the deepening British crisis would produce new forces that could be won to an anti-imperialist position on Ireland. The striking miners' experience of police brutality, government manipulation and rigged courts led many of them to identify their own struggle with that of the Irish people. The risings in 1981 and the miners' strike 1984-5 have already shown that the expectation that real possibilities for building an effective anti-imperialist movement exist in Britain is far from being 'unrealistic'. Indeed as the crisis develops and more and more sections of the working class are forced into confrontation with the British state these possibilities will multiply.

The growing political and social crisis in Britain has also revealed that the official Labour movement will move further and further to the right as its own position is increasingly threatened - a point confirmed during the miners' strike. What is indeed a 'totally unrealistic expectation' is any belief that the existing official Labour movement can be won to a progressive position on Ireland.

Comrade McAteer and the Republican Movement have every right to assess developments in Britain from their own standpoint and act upon that assessment. But neither the Republican Movement nor opportunists in Britain claiming to act in its name have any right whatsoever to demand that the RCG and other British anti-imperialists must accept that assessment and any conclusions that flow from it. For while we have the same goal as the Republican Movement - the defeat of British imperialism in Ireland - we necessarily approach that goal along a different path. Comrade McAteer is right to say that 'Republicans cannot afford the luxury of waiting around until the British working class becomes sufficiently politicised to fully support our struggle in all its form'. But we equally are right to expose the role of the official Labour movement and to fight against the very opportunism which not only obstructs the struggle for Irish self-determination but also the struggle for socialism in Britain. We are also right - indeed it is our duty - to concentrate our efforts on building an effective anti-imperialist movement amongst the most oppressed sections of the working class, whilst at the same time working in unity with any other forces whenever possible.

Similar issues have arisen in relation to the building of a solidarity movement against the apartheid regime. The *Proletarian* leaflet claims that Johnstone Makatini, Director of the ANC's International Department has called for 'the shelving of differences within the Anti-Apartheid Movement in this country and for unity on the basis of exclusive recognition of the ANC'. This is a misrepresentation of comrade Makatini's remarks in London on 3 August. He did

urge unity of the AAM in Britain. He did say as a separate point that the ANC had initiated a campaign for what he called, 'exclusive recognition' of the ANC as the sole representative of the liberation struggle in South Africa.

If the ANC chooses to campaign for 'exclusive recognition' that is a matter for the South African people to resolve. The same would be true if the Pan Africanist Congress, the Black Consciousness Movement, the UDF, AZAPO or any other force within the overall liberation movement took a similar stand. It is not a matter for the movement in Britain to decide or, even worse, cynically exploit for their own narrow sectarian ends. *Proletarian's* 'interpretation' of comrade Makatini's remarks, in any case, flatly contradicts the AAM's own constitutional requirement:

'to cooperate with and support Southern African organisations campaigning against apartheid' (Clause 2c)

The AAM's constitutional position is the only correct internationalist position for organisations in Britain. That the leadership of the AAM has consistently failed to abide by its own constitution on this issue is something that must be opposed. For British organisations to take it upon themselves to decide only to recognise one liberation organisation fighting apartheid and not others in the same fight is British imperialist arrogance and chauvinism of the worst kind. Our task in Britain is to give unconditional support to all organisations in their fight against apartheid in South Africa regardless of differences which may arise between different sections of the liberation movement.

Unity in the British AAM does not mean the shelving of differences. Unity means the democratically organised co-operation of different forces with different political standpoints in a common campaign against the apartheid regime and against British collaboration with that regime. When those in the AAM, who have attacked and disaffiliated City AA and also attacked the RCG's involvement in the AAM, call for 'unity', what they mean is the bureaucratic imposition of their own narrow sectarian prejudices on all anti-apartheid activists. No one seriously committed to the destruction of apartheid could submit to this demand. The fact that these sectarians attempt to use the heroic sacrifices of the South African people and the ANC to justify their own sectarian behaviour is an insult to the people of South Africa.

In the forefront of the sectarianism in the AAM is the Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB) - primarily the *Morning Star* wing of that party. In common with their counterparts in the solidarity movement on Ireland, they have rejected any attempt to build an alliance with the newly emerging political forces in Britain. All their anti-apartheid activity is strictly confined to what is acceptable to maintain their alliance with sections of the official Labour movement. Their 'unity' requires the separation of apartheid in South Africa and racism in Britain, disaffiliation of City AA (now the largest active anti-

apartheid group in the country), attempts to ban *FRFI* from official AAM pickets, bureaucratic manoeuvring against anyone 'suspected' of wanting an active movement, and a foul, non-stop campaign of rumour, gossip and lies to justify their own position. (See reports in this *FRFI* and recent issues.) Any movement in Britain which denies basic democratic rights to its own supporters cannot possibly be trusted to wage a consistent fight for the democratic rights of the people of South Africa.

The political priority of the CPGB and its allies in the leadership of the AAM is the election of a Labour government under Neil Kinnock. They are prepared to subordinate the struggle against apartheid to this opportunist end. This is why they object to *FRFI* being sold on official AAM events because it contains material on Ireland and other issues which expose the reactionary character of their chosen allies. We remind these self-styled communists of Lenin's explanation of the task of the working class in the oppressor nation in relation to national oppression, which is to oppose:

'the bourgeoisie of that nation and all the elements that follow it'

The Labour Party's record on South Africa, and its record on Ireland, prove beyond dispute that it is one of the elements that follow the bourgeoisie.

As with Ireland, so with South Africa, unconditional solidarity with the struggle against national oppression does not and cannot oblige British communists to give up that struggle against British opportunism. Our job, as communists and anti-imperialists, working in the world's oldest imperialist nation, is to formulate the strategy and tactics appropriate to the building of an anti-imperialist movement in Britain in solidarity with all those fighting British imperialism and national oppression.

Terry O'Halloran and David Reed

Suggested reading:

Lenin: 'The nascent trend of imperialist economism', *Collected Works*, Volume 23 (available as pamphlet 40p plus 24p p&p)

Lenin: 'A caricature of Marxism and imperialist economism', *Collected Works*, Volume 23 (also in pamphlet above)

Lenin: 'The right of nations to self-determination', *Collected Works*, Volume 20 (available as pamphlet 40p plus 24 p&p)

Lenin: 'The discussion on self-determination summed up', *Collected Works*, Volume 22

Reed D: *Ireland: the key to the British revolution*, Chapter 2 (£3.95 plus 65p p&p)

Brickley C, O'Halloran T, Reed D: *South Africa: Britain out of apartheid apartheid out of Britain* (95p plus 28p p&p)

Pamphlets and books can be obtained from: Larkin Publications, BCM Box 5909, London, WC1N 3XX (cheques/POs made payable to Larkin Publications)



— now with allies in Britain

Interview with Omwony Ojwok –
Uganda National Liberation Front
(Anti-Dictatorship)

The Uganda National Liberation Front (Anti- Dictatorship)

The Front was formed in March 1979 during the Uganda/Tanzania war, and was in power for one year and one month during 1979/80. It was an umbrella of 22 organisations and at that time it was an anti-fascist front. It represented the working class, the peasantry, the petty-bourgeoisie, the national bourgeoisie and even certain comprador elements who were opposed to Idi Amin. After Idi Amin was overthrown, the Front began to reorganise the population and this led to a transformation of the Front from an anti-fascist front to a national democratic front. This led to the Front taking in only the working class, the peasantry, the petty bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie. The Front no longer accepts the comprador.

Certain forces who felt their interests threatened and who had originally been in the Front, such as the comprador, began to feel unhappy about the changes which were taking place, and the involvement of the masses in politics. So these ones began systematically to sabotage the Front.

Secondly, there were other groups which had dictatorial tendencies, and which represented certain bourgeois forces, such as the Uganda Peoples Congress (UPC)/Obote clique which had earlier ruled the country, as well as other petty bourgeois groups. These also began to feel that the involvement of the masses in a systematic way in politics would undermine their leadership. So they also went ahead to sabotage the Front. These linked up with foreign forces, notably Tanzania, but Tanzania itself was backed by certain imperialist countries like Britain. This led to the overthrow of the Front.

Obote's organisation, the UPC was one of the 22 founding organisations, but in fact what Obote did was to use double tactics: to work from within to undermine the Front, while he himself remained in Tanzania to carry out a campaign against it in order to prepare the ground for taking power. Other compradorial elements did not immediately organise themselves as separate groups, but they carried out, for example, things like economic sabotage, dismantling any attempts by the poor peasantry in the countryside to organise against smuggling, and the formation of local sales and vigilante groups and so on. They later on came out to form their own organisations some of which are now beginning to go back to the regime.

The 27 July coup

The Front was overthrown in May 1980 by a military junta led by the supporters of Milton Obote. Then, this junta organised fraudulent elections in December of that year and Milton Obote came to power. Now, naturally, since he had not been elected by the people, the Ugandans began spontaneous opposition to this. This overall resistance to the Obote regime is actually what led to the overthrow of Obote himself in the sense that it created cracks within his own regime between various factions, notably on ethnic and religious lines. So that on 27 July this year, Obote was overthrown. Our reaction to the July coup was to insist on proposals which we have adopted ever since March 1981 for a round table conference of all political forces with genuine support inside the country. We felt that the only way to tackle the problem was to have this conference, which, we hoped, would bring about a provisional government of national unity in order to create conditions that would bring about genuinely free and fair elections.

We also insist that this provisional government must work on a common programme which would tackle political as well as economic and social problems of the masses.

Uganda is a former British colony in East Africa which gained its independence in 1962. It has a population of 13½ million, 90% of whom are peasants. The working class is very small, approximately 300,000 to ½ million. 90% of Uganda's export earnings come from coffee and copper exports form most of the rest. The country's foreign debt is \$1.5bn, owed mainly to the IMF and World Bank.

Uganda once again became a major feature in the British media when a military coup on 27 July overthrew the brutal Obote dictatorship. During Obote's rule over 300,000 people were killed, many in the most savage ways. Since 1980 the Uganda National Liberation Front – Anti-Dictatorship (UNLF-AD), a broad revolutionary front, has been fighting to establish democracy in Uganda based on the interests of the workers and peasants.

On 20 August Omwony Ojwok, on behalf of the UNLF-AD spoke to FRFI and explained the political background to events in Uganda.

UGANDA

The National Resistance Army (NRA)

The NRA is the coming together of two organisations. The Uganda Freedom Fighters which was led by ex-President Lule who is now dead, and the Popular Resistance Army (PRA) which at that time was led by Museveni, the current leader of the NRA. These two organisations came together on basically opportunist grounds. The PRA felt that they had to operate near the capital but they did not have political support in that area which was basically a Democratic Party area. Now, Lule at the time, had no military power in the country. He came from the area near the capital. So the PRA felt that they could use the political umbrella of Lule in order to operate in that area. Lule probably expected that through the NRA he would be able to come back into the political scene. So we see the national resistance movement as representing the coalition of various forces, some of which are definitely democratic, but some are militarist and even tending towards dictatorial strategies.

The strength of the NRA is a reflection of a) the weakness of the Ugandan army and its internal divisions and b) the popular hostility to the general military regime as a whole. I think what is really happening is that the NRA is cashing in on this.

We have been extremely critical of the NRA not just for demanding half the seats in the Military Commission, but even the very principle of forming part of yet another military regime in Uganda. Uganda does not require to be ruled by a military regime. The people of Uganda have been struggling for democracy. So the attempt on the part of NRA and other groups to find a place for themselves in the military regime, constitutes an attempt to re-establish and in fact consolidate dictatorship in Uganda. We are totally opposed to it.

British imperialism and Uganda

Britain is the single most important foreign power in the country. Britain of course, as a former colonial power had built up a whole series of institutions and agencies, as well as individuals which supports her interests in Uganda. Uganda represents one of the classic examples of imperialist divide and rule politics. The method Britain used to infiltrate Ugandan society at the earliest stages of colonisation was through the use of religious organisations.

Britain now sees dictatorship in Uganda as the only way by which it can export British capital, British goods, and get them bought.

The major British firms operating inside Uganda are Lonrho, Unilever,

ICI, Mitchelcotts in the agricultural sector, British petroleum is of course very important in this, BAT. You name any major British company it is actually there and of course all the big banks. So British economic presence in Uganda is very dominant.

Imperialism and Uganda

Uganda is the source of the river Nile. The Sudan and Egypt depend on the Nile. Both are very key countries in the middle Eastern strategic calculations of the major powers. Uganda is crucial for developments, not only in Sudan and Egypt, but in the Middle East as a whole. This explains why Israel and the United States played such a key role in assisting Idi Amin in his overthrow of Obote in the 60s.

Secondly, Uganda is a neighbour to certain very key countries in the African continent: Sudan, Zaire and Tanzania, with its role in Southern African politics. Also Kenya, which provides facilities for the American Rapid Deployment Force and Israeli personnel. Control over Uganda is crucial to ensure continued stability along imperialist lines.

British troops first returned to Uganda as a training force, under the cover of a commonwealth military training team in which Australia, Canada and various other commonwealth countries were also represented. This military team was to train the new Uganda army supposedly to establish discipline.

We opposed the involvement of this military team, and by the middle of 1983 all the other commonwealth countries withdrew. Britain not only remained the only commonwealth country still training these troops, but increased the number of trainers from 13 to 20.

The increase took place after the American government officially came out with the statement that atrocities were being committed. I would like to draw attention to the fact that this military training team is still in Uganda.

The 1980 election

An electoral commission made up of 5 people was announced, all but one of whom were supporters of the UPC/Obote clique, including the chairman. The way the boundaries were demarcated, the registration of voters and the nominations which led to UPC claiming over 10 seats unopposed, clearly showed a systematic attempt on the part of the military junta to impose the UPC/Obote clique. In spite of all this, Britain spearheaded a so called commonwealth observation team to observe the elections. The observers did not at all discuss this background to the elections. They just went there at the last minute to observe the actual voting.



in some cases there have actually been deportation orders. We would like the British people, first of all to learn a little bit more about the history and the circumstances of Uganda than what the British establishment press tends to give, which is purely a tribalistic and racist analysis. The struggle in Uganda is dictatorship versus democracy. That is the essence of the problem. Of course, this problem presents itself in various forms, religious, ethnic and so on, but the crucial thing is that. We will provide speakers and send literature and so on to whichever organisation or group of people or individuals are interested.

We would like the British people to make representations to the British government to stop supporting successive dictators in Uganda. We demand that British military personnel in Uganda be withdrawn. We appeal to the British people to give whatever support they can to the numerous Ugandan refugees in Britain.

Sri Lankan Army Terror as talks collapse

The two month old talks in the Himalayan Kingdom of Bhutan between the Sri Lankan government and representatives of the oppressed Tamil people broke down in August when government troops and racist thugs went on a rampage killing hundreds of Tamil people in the north of Sri Lanka. President Jayewardene's troops go on shooting sprees through Tamil populated areas, tossing grenades and shooting indiscriminately.

The talks were initiated by the Indian government in an attempt to stop the situation in Sri Lanka having serious political consequences in India. In Tamil Nadu (India), 55 million Tamil people identify closely with the Tamil people of Sri Lanka and as the Indian government knows well, will be influenced by the revolutionary politics of the Tamil militants leading the struggle in Sri Lanka. The militants agreed to a ceasefire, on condition that the army returned to barracks. During the talks representatives of the Eelam National Liberation Front (ENLF) – an alliance of four major revolutionary groups – put 4 basic demands on the government: recognition of Tamils as a distinct nationality; recognition of the Tamils' right to self-determination; recognition of a Tamil homeland in Sri Lanka and full citizenship rights for Tamils who regard Sri Lanka as their home.

The leader of the government team, Hector Jayewardene (brother of the President) rejected all the demands out of hand. With arrogant hypocrisy he stated 'That Sri Lanka was the homeland of all its peoples and that the separation and division would never be countenanced'. 'Homeland for all its people' – obviously not for the Tamil plantation workers whose right to citizenship he rejects; obviously not for the Tamil people as a whole who are subjected to racist oppression and genocide. It became clear, when the government refused to even discuss ceasefire violations by the army, that it was using the talks only as a means of undermining the struggle of the Tamil people. The Indian government's 'neutrality' was also exposed when it deported from India two well known Tamil militants.

The Tamil leaders called on the government to adhere to the ceasefire agreement, for the army to return to barracks and for the government to present 'concrete and constructive proposals towards fulfilling Tamil aspirations.' But the army replied with more killings. It became clear that the Tamil people have no alternative but to defend themselves and fight. As a representative of the ENLF put it: 'It is better for the Tamils to die fighting than to die without fighting.'

I urge all democratic and anti-racist people to write to President Jayewardene, Colombo, Sri Lanka, to protest against the government genocide against the Tamil people.

Viraj Mendis

Even when one reads the results of this team carefully one can clearly see that the elections were rigged. But in spite of all this the elections were declared by this team to have been free and fair, supposedly in the context of the circumstances of Uganda. This clearly shows the double standards of democracy, one which was supposed to be for a country like Uganda and another one which was supposed to be for Britain. Britain played a key role in this process.

The UPC/Obote regime adopted an economic programme which was literally dictated by the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the British government. Nationalisation was renounced. Uganda in the United Nations and international forums came out systematically on the side of Britain.

The Obote regime pushed through parliament a law which provided for the return to their former owners of all properties that had either been nationalised or expropriated. Not only by the Amin regime, but even by his own earlier regime of the 60s.

Dictatorship vs democracy

The UNLF(A-D) has Marxist/Leninists, as well as various strands of Social Democratic and even capitalist elements. The uniting factor, what brings all of them together, is the struggle for four principles. Namely, the struggle for the unity of the country, the struggle for democracy, the struggle for national independence and opposition to foreign interference and the struggle for social progress.

What the Front seeks to do and has been doing for the last 5 years is to politically organise the population in order to struggle for their democratic rights. What it means is establishing political structures at the local level, for example in the countryside, organising the peasantry, especially the poor peasantry because they are the ones who spontaneously get involved in this type of organisation. The working class, either in the factories or in the countryside are also organised.

At the same time the Front has been developing mass organisations. These mass organisations are those of workers, those of peasants, those of youth and students and professional people as well as women. While this is going on the Front has also been developing the basis for an armed struggle in order to prepare the ground for a protracted people's war.

Britain is a signatory of the Geneva convention relating to refugees, and in that capacity, Britain has accepted a number of Ugandans here as refugees. Nevertheless Ugandans have had their decisions for refugee status very very much delayed.

Ugandans who have sought political asylum are suffering tremendously, and

A huge and beautiful country, Ethiopia stretches across a million square kilometres from the Red Sea in the North to Lake Tana, the source of the Blue Nile in the South. The 42 million people who inhabit this territory have several different languages and cultures and subsistence farming is the predominant activity. Today large sections of the Ethiopian population are directly threatened with death by starvation as a result of one of the worst famines in its history. The peasant farmer and the independent nomad are huddled together in the relief camps, nothing distinguishes them in their skeletal structure, greying skin and weary eyes. Women too, and children, are all grey, aged and emaciated.

The Ethiopian famine is a part of that affecting some 250 million people in 22 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa where hunger and the next step, death, is an immediate threat. Millions of children are likely to sustain permanent mental and other debilities as a result of an inadequate daily diet. Five out of seven children who die each year worldwide are from Africa. In Ethiopia itself a million and a half people have died in the most recent of a succession of famines.

Famine, and its consequences, disease and destruction, are not new to Ethiopia. In 1957-58 the Highlands of Tigre were affected and in 1964-65 the province of Wollo. In the famine of 1971-74 over half a million people died. The feudal authorities contemptuously declared this to be the will of god. Popular reaction to this led to the final overthrow of Emperor Haile Selassie's feudal regime.

The famines of the present century are

Immediately all Western aid to this, one of the poorest countries in the world, ceased. Despite this the last ten years have seen enormous progress. The number of places for primary and secondary schoolchildren has been increased by 2m and the percentage of schoolchildren attending school has increased from 19% to 49%. The number of teachers from 24,800 to 54,000. Above all the National Literacy Campaign, conducted among rural peasants in over 300 literacy centres has led to a rise in literacy from 37% to 93%. This achievement has been recognised by UNESCO who presented the Ethiopian government with a special award.

A Relief and Rehabilitation Commission was set up to seek long-term solutions to the historic problems of famine in the most commonly afflicted areas. But just at the point in time when hope for a future free from the domination of



ETHIOPIA

the result of the deliberate perpetuation of a feudal mode of social organisation that satisfied both the aristocratic ruling class at home and the colonial vultures sitting on the borders of the country.

For very clear historical reasons the development of Ethiopia is quite unlike that of any other African country. A ruling class elite, a landed aristocracy related by family ties to an emperor, owned 90% of the land. The only European power that succeeded in denting this centrally organised and highly bureaucratic society were the Italians. An Italian army was dispatched to claim Ethiopia in 1896 but was rebuffed by an Ethiopian army united under the Emperor Menelik II. Only the Province of Eritrea remained under partial Italian occupation and this was used as a bridgehead for a second Italian invasion under Mussolini in 1935.

The British and US drove the Italians out in the Second World War and returned the Emperor Haile Selassie who had taken refuge in the English city of Bath. This feudal king, proud owner of 25 Rolls Royces and all the trappings of a feudal monarch, was not concerned to change the social conditions which left the country open to recurring famine. But despite the support of the imperialists the revolution of 1974 overthrew the feudal aristocracy in the name of the people.

illiteracy and hunger was within the grasp of the Ethiopian people, the hostility of the imperialist powers is unleashed upon them. Since 1974 no US food is handed over directly to the Ethiopian government. Even in the present crisis all dealings are conducted through charitable agencies and the churches. Earlier this year US vice-president Bush announced that the US, whose granaries are overflowing with surplus and rotting grain, will donate \$100m a year in foodstuffs to Africa for 5 years to those countries which institute economic 'reforms' approved of by the US. Ethiopia, which does not tow US imperialism's line, is of course to be excluded. Britain's aid to Ethiopia in 1983 was an insulting £13,000. In fact the country receives less aid than any other country in the so-called Third World, the United Nations figures are \$4.80 a head of the population in 1984.

Trapped by an inheritance of no social services, the new government is desperately trying to build the roads, sewerage and electrical schemes so necessary to provide the people with their needs. These projects are undermined by the continued effect of imperialist transnational companies, their government sabotage and the world capitalist crisis. The Ethiopian economy is severely hurt by the drop in world coffee prices. Coffee is the country's largest foreign

exchange-earner which accounts for 69% of its exports. At the same time the Ethiopian debt service ratio (the proportion of exports required to cover interest payment on loans) rose from 14.6% in 1978 to 20% in 1984. The Ethiopian debt to imperialist banks overall is \$2 billion and this is expected to double by 1990. In the Saharan region as a whole, \$470m was paid to service debts in 1973. By 1982 the figure had leapt to \$3.2bn.

The imperialists are determined to isolate and destroy the Ethiopian revolution as Ethiopia occupies a strategic position in the Horn of Africa and the entire region which stretches from the Middle East and the Persian Gulf, through Egypt, Sudan, Kenya, Somalia and Oman, the great oil producing and exporting routes. Per capita the Horn of Africa is more highly militarised than anywhere else in the 'Third World'. The imperialists know that they must retain tight control of the area to protect their profits. In 1977 the USA made its first direct attempt to overthrow the Revolutionary Government of Ethiopia when, under the Carter administration Somalia was encouraged to invade in what was known as the Ogaden War. Although defeated by the Ethiopian army with the aid of 18,000 Cuban soldiers, Somalia remains a threatening presence to the young revolution.

Puppet of the USA, Somalia has over half of its national budget paid for by America and houses the port of Berbera which is a United States base used to supplement the Indian Ocean facilities at Diego Garcia where the US Rapid Deployment Force sits. Today the US and West European imperialists continue to use their reactionary Arab surrogates to finance and provoke separatist movements into attacking the Ethiopian government.

Horrible though the present famine is, and horrible though the prospect for the future of Sub-Saharan countries may be, there is a way forward. Ethiopia is reorganising peasant production so as to overcome the disaster it has inherited. The Relief and Rehabilitation Commission has planned a resettlement programme which will take people away from the doomed areas into others of greater agricultural potential. At present only 14% of the estimated 79m hectares of good arable land is under the plough. Of a further 3 million hectares of land which could become productive if irrigated only 100,000 hectares are now used.

The USSR has been giving aid and help over a period of time to rehabilitate communities and has provided three-quarters of the transport for food lifts. But the USA has declared that it 'does not want any part of it'. And just to further undermine this hope for the future the Reagan administration has just announced that it is considering a trade boycott of Ethiopia.

Susan Davidson

THE LIVE AID CONCERT

The Live Aid international concert in August, organised by Irish singer Bob Geldof, is said to have raised £43m for Ethiopian famine relief. Mrs Thatcher and Fleet Street spared no praise depicting the accomplishment as a model of 'private charity' superior to any form of state aid. In fact, the publicity and praise surrounding Live Aid served as a means to conceal the devastating imperialist exploitation to which Africa is being subjected.

Sponsors of Live Aid included multinationals in electronics, motor cars, fast food chains, and others, as well as the big imperialist banks. The overheads were paid for by an oil millionaire.

Together these plunderers hold Africa in the vice of a £172bn foreign debt. This year alone, African nations will have to pay back £11bn while millions face starvation. While trying to polish up their image, the multinationals conceal the fact that they spend more than the total collected at Live Aid every hour on armaments production.

Many of the singers and groups used Live Aid, of course, with some honourable exceptions, to boost their own reputation and earnings. Indeed so unscrupulous are these performers that while pretending to be concerned at human suffering, they have no qualms about performing in South Africa. The solution to the famine is not 'private charity' à la Thatcher and multinational businessmen, but the destruction of imperialism and the cancellation of all foreign debts.

Eddie Abrahams

GREENPEACE MURDER - ACCEPTABLE TERRORISM

No-one now seriously doubts that the Greenpeace ship 'Rainbow Warrior' was blown up and a crewmember killed by the DGSE - the French Secret Service. Greenpeace was a British ship, blown up in New Zealand, a member of the British 'Commonwealth' of nations. So why is it that Mrs Thatcher, that resolute opponent of 'terrorism' has had absolutely nothing to say in condemnation of this gross use of force and violence? Remember Mrs Thatcher believes that violence is 'never justified' to achieve any ends no matter how just the cause may be?

'Rainbow Warrior', blown up on 10 July, was due to lead a flotilla of ships into the Mururoa Atoll - the French nuclear testing area of the Pacific - in order to prevent a fresh round of the tests which have over the years done untold damage to the people and their islands in the 'French' Pacific. France now refuses to release the public health statistics for 'French' Polynesia, and the tests have been condemned by every single independent

South Pacific State.

The act of state terrorist aggression against Greenpeace is not an isolated one: the French Navy has previously rammed Greenpeace boats in the area, and Greenpeace activists have been severely beaten up by French sailors. Six French agents who have been named by the New Zealand police are implicated in the attack - 2 of them, a woman Captain in the DGSE and a Major in the underwater sabotage training team, have been charged with sabotage and murder. Yet the report commissioned by 'socialist' President Mitterrand has the nerve to completely exonerate the DGSE of any responsibility for its agents' actions.

New Zealand Prime Minister, David Lange, who had been trying to play down the extent of French government involvement has now been forced to charge France with 'a gross piece of espionage' against a friendly nation. Thatcher has yet to take her stand. Maggie Mellon

US THREATS MOUNT

The build up of US military pressure against the Sandinista People's Revolution continued throughout the summer.

The US ambassador in Managua, Harry Bergola, was recalled to Washington for consultations on 19 July, the sixth anniversary of the revolution; but not before he had delivered a provocative note to the Nicaraguan government saying that 'the patience of the people and government of the United States is being used up'. The note claimed that the Sandinistas were planning attacks on US military personnel in Honduras, naturally without producing any evidence for the claim as none existed. The note warned of drastic US reprisals if Nicaragua carried out any such attacks.

As August opened the Contras suffered severe defeats. From 1-6 there was



Rally in support of Sandinistas

heavy fighting around the northern border town of Esten as the Contras attempted to seize it and turn it into a provisional capital and a basis for US recognition. The attempt was beaten off, and the Contras were driven back into Honduras with heavy casualties.

The US ambassador to the United Nations, Vernon Walters, a long-time collaborator of Chilean fascist generals and Guatemalan death squads, was interviewed on Colombian TV on 14 August. He said a US invasion of Nicaragua wasn't ruled out if Washington couldn't achieve its objectives by other means.

The peoples of Central America are not intimidated by Reagan's threats. The Sandinista government has armed and organised its people to confront the danger of US aggression. Now, more than ever, it is necessary for revolutionary and democratic forces to oppose US aggression.

Mike Webber

POETRY OF SOUTH AFRICA

Jacques Alvarez-Pereyre, *The Poetry of Commitment in South Africa* (translated by Clive Wake), Heinemann Studies in African Literature 1984 (original edition 1979)

Knowing words don't kill
But a gun does.
That's struggle
For no more jive
Evening's eight
Ain't never too late
Black is Struggle (*Mafika Gwala*)

These lines taken from this detailed study by a French poet and professor at Grenoble University summarise the change taking place in South Africa. The author traces the history of the liberation struggle. With the growing strength of the movement the poets' commitment intensifies, moving from pain and rage to an open exhortation to take up arms. All these poets, however, reject 'the privilege of the ivory tower'.

The first liberal poets who introduced English writing to South Africa, such as Thomas Pringle (in the 1820s), denounced the state of oppression in Africa, but remained part of the white colonial or liberal middle class. Peter Horn, in 'Poems at Bargain Prices', aimed to shake the indifference of the comfortable and often ignorant white bourgeoisie. But the reality of life for the black majority was totally ignored, whilst black resistance organised itself and created the African National Congress.

Two-thirds of the book deals with the poets of full commitment, starting with Hugh Lewin and David Evans (both white) who spent years in gaol. Hugh Lewin's 'bare' language reflects the



hardship and dreariness of life in South African jails.

Soon after Sharpeville there was a revival and outcry in the vernacular. This renaissance of Zulu and Xhosa poetry followed in the steps of older poets such as Dhlomo, who wrote in 'The Valley of a Thousand Hills' (1941): 'My mind is made: I will yet strike for right'.

A whole chapter is dedicated to Dennis Brutus and Cosmo Pieterse, both inspiring poets, who paid for their commitment with imprisonment. In 1973, years after his release from Robben Island, Brutus retained his links with those left behind, such as Nelson Mandela and Robert Sobukwe, who are 'in the grey cells, on the grey floors, stubborn and bowed'.

Although the author does not regard Cosmo Pieterse's love for his homeland as the major theme of his writing, in the 'Poets to the People', Pieterse's love of men and love of his homeland are intertwined.

In the last two chapters, language becomes an explosion of words, the outcry of a new generation of angry poets such as Wally Serote, Don Mattera, James Matthews, and many others (only mentioned in the book).

Graffiti express extreme anger, slang

and cheekiness become the language of poets who have done away with politeness and fear, conscious of their identity and their power. Mafika Gwala rejects the reformists and warns the 'black status seekers' that their time is nearly over: 'Non-Whites you're hardboiled eggs; Your golden intentions are a threat/To the nation's health'.

Gwala belongs to the generation of the 1970s, an angry poet committed to revolutionary change. As Franz Fanon predicted, black people are writing their own history, breaking all the barriers of alienation.

In his 'Conclusion', the author considers whether this poetry can affect apartheid. His answer is 'no', for the apartheid regime is thicker than 'a hippopotamus' hide'. However powerful poetry is, it cannot uproot fascism – the armed struggle is the only answer. Yet this poetry will remain as the historical record of the South African blacks' gigantic struggle against this no longer insuperable monster. It is also a great inspiration to English speakers the world over who are showing their solidarity with the people of South Africa and who wish to learn about Black culture in that country.

Colette Levy

SOUTH AFRICAN GOLD DIGGERS

Anglo American and the rise of modern South Africa by Duncan Innes, pp358, Heinemann, £8.50 Pbk

For over 100 years mining, especially gold, has been the engine of apartheid and the motive for imperialism's involvement in South Africa. This was why the threatened general strike in South Africa's mines was so feared by the moneymarkets of South Africa and London. This excellent study of South Africa's leading mining and financial corporation is also a study of the development of apartheid and class struggle in South Africa.



In the nineteenth century British capital poured into South Africa with the discovery of the world's largest reserves of diamonds and later gold. (Today South Africa is the world's largest producer of these and many other essential minerals.) The system of racism known as apartheid was initially developed by the British imperialists and their representatives in South Africa as a means of controlling the labour supply for the mines, particularly after the British victory in the Boer war. Apartheid is the ultimate grotesque expression of a system based on profit.

Capital generated within South Africa was never sufficient to match the needs of the major mining companies who looked to Britain and elsewhere for the finance to buy up land, and their rivals, whilst introducing mechanisation. Thus Anglo American (AA) was established in 1917, under the chairmanship of E. Oppenheimer, as a means of raising foreign capital to develop the Far East Rand gold field. Of its initial capital of £1m, 50% was from the US, the rest equally from Britain and South Africa. Its initial backers included Herbert Hoover, later US president, General Smuts, South Africa's prime minister, and one of its directors was the South African minister of finance. This shows the close connection between AA and the state which has always been an integral part of its development.

Following the redivision of the world after the first imperialist war, AA used its political influence and economic might to take control of German diamond mines in Namibia in 1920. It took over De Beers and established a world monopoly in diamond sales. Again after the second imperialist war AA needed, and obtained, a massive supply of finance to develop new gold fields and buy up its rivals to become the world's leading gold producer. Of 23 new gold companies formed in South Africa between 1946 and 1960, Anglo financed 21 of them. 27% of all capital needed by AA in this period came from Britain – more than that from the US and the rest of Europe put together. During this whole period apartheid laws were steadily tightened by the South African state to facilitate the expansion of the mining industry. A massive army of migrant labourers without any rights were brought in to work in South Africa's mines: by 1960 the total labour force on the mines was approximately 500,000.

The workers were treated as nothing more than units of labour whose surplus value produced huge profits for imperialist investors.

Anglo American steadily took over industries associated with mining in countries with large mineral reserves. It established control of the world's leading copper producing mines in Zambia, to name one example. When part of its share was bought out by the Zambian government, AA used the revenue to establish one of its many subsidiaries, MINORCO, which is today the world's leading foreign investor in the USA. In 1924, with the help of the British Imperial Chemical Industries, AA established what is today South Africa's leading explosives and chemical industry AECI. In order to ensure control of the press, AA took over South Africa's largest publishing house, Argus, (1971) which at that time ran 17 of South Africa's 20 English speaking newspapers. To print its propaganda AA established one of South Africa's largest paper companies. AA's influence is now so widespread

that it controls South Africa's largest brewery and has considerable interests in steel, cars, shipping, construction etc.

More importantly, since the 1950s Anglo has taken an ever increasing stake in the banks and finance houses. Initially this was through establishing a merchant bank, UAL, which later merged (1972) to form NEDSUAL, one of South Africa's 3 largest banks. Innes points out that this was not to compete with the other two: in 1976 AA had an 8% holding in Standard Bank and 17.5% holding in Barclays National, South Africa's two major banks. (In August 1985 Anglo American increased their share in Barclays to 25% at the same time as the British-based Barclays International reduced its share.) The Oppenheimer family sit on the Barclays board of directors.

With the assistance of imperialist finance Anglo American is now in the position of controlling 250 companies in 22 countries outside South Africa, and with interests in 73 international banking and industrial concerns. The list of companies controlled by Anglo runs to 45 pages in Innes' book: 10 pages cover just some of the major international companies and banks which AA is connected with.

The book is full of many more such statistics, each new takeover exceeding in enormity the previous one: the massive monopoly is extended. To this monopoly apartheid is invaluable, imperialist backing is invaluable. In spite of too much sociological jargon the book is excellent research. It illustrates perfectly the logic of capitalism as described by Marx and later Lenin. Although Innes correctly relates the rise of modern South Africa to the struggle of the working class, he is preoccupied with the industrial might of the class, leading to an implicit criticism of the necessary turn to armed struggle by the ANC in 1961. The struggle of the South African people since 1961 is barely dealt with in the book, and the entire work effectively ends in 1976 which means it contains little up-to-date information. When Anglo American sacked 14,000 miners in April 1985 Umkhonto we Sizwe (armed wing of the ANC) blew up AA's offices. This showed the unity of different forms of struggle, a unity which will destroy the South African state. These criticisms should not however overshadow a fascinating book.

Chris Fraser

THE OTHER SIDE OF PARADISE

The Other side of Paradise – Foreign Control in the Caribbean by Tom Barry, Beth Wood, and Deb Preusch pp405 Grove Press NY £6.95 Pbk

While the Caribbean is a luxury playground for rich tourists, most of its people live in grinding poverty. This book starts to show why, by describing the domination of the region by imperialist companies and governments.

Imperialist companies – from the US, Britain, Canada, and Europe – are in the Caribbean to make money. In 1980, for example, US companies investing in the Caribbean made a profit of 30.5% compared to a world average of 14.3%. This was achieved by holding down wage rates, smashing trade unions, forcing down prices paid for local products, and extorting subsidies and tax concessions from governments whose incomes are often smaller than those of the multinational companies they are dealing with.

For example, the US multinational Gulf & Western pays sugar cane cutters in the Dominican Republic 2-3 dollars for a day's work (for cutting 1-2 tons of cane). The same company's campaign against worker organisation has led to many sackings, arrests, and even deaths of trade union organisers. The British company Geest, which buys the entire banana crops of St Lucia, St Vincent, Grenada, and Dominica has forced the price it pays so far that many banana growers earn less than they do as farm labourers – and meanwhile Geest has increased its own share of the final retail price of the bananas from 35% to 45%. In many countries, 'temporary' investment incentives have been retained permanently as a result of companies' threats to move their operations elsewhere if they were withdrawn.

Meanwhile, imperialist governments and institutions like the World Bank

and the IMF use their power to maintain 'a favourable climate for foreign investment' in the region. Typical examples are Grenada and Jamaica. Reagan's invasion of Grenada was the sixteenth major US military intervention in the region since 1898. In each case, the object has been to establish a government which was more willing to allow foreign companies to dominate their country.

In Jamaica, the imperialists were slightly more subtle. Michael Manley's 'democratic socialist' government was steadily undermined by the withdrawal of almost all foreign aid and the flight of private capital. The resulting economic crisis, and a violent election campaign (with over 600 deaths) from the pro-Western opposition, led to Manley's defeat in the 1980 elections. Immediately the US and the IMF started pumping money in to support Seaga's reactionary government. Neither Bishop in Grenada nor Manley in Jamaica had even reduced foreign firms' profits, but their social reforms, and their gradual nationalisation of sections of their economies, threatened to reduce the opportunities for imperialist exploitation of their countries.

What the imperialists fear most is that the people of the Caribbean will decide they are better off without them, so they are determined to destroy any signs of emerging socialism. Their greatest failure has been in Cuba, which has set a shining example in health care, education, housing, and rural development under Castro's socialist government, despite the US's best efforts to destroy the Cuban revolution. These include an attempted invasion in 1961, assassination attempts on Castro himself, economic sabotage such as the spreading of viral diseases among the island's pigs and poultry, and a twenty-five year economic blockade which has cost Cuba over nine billion dollars. Two things above all have defeated these attacks – the tremendous determination of the Cuban people in defending the gains they have made, and the economic sup-

port of the Soviet Union. While many Caribbean countries have suffered from falling prices for their agricultural and mineral exports, Cuba has received a fixed price from the socialist countries for 2/3 of its sugar exports, which in 1982 was three to four times the 'free market price' paid by the imperialist countries.

The book documents all this in enormous detail, with hundreds of examples of foreign intervention and manipulation of the Caribbean. It lacks, however, a wider view of the international forces which have brought about the situation. The Caribbean's dependence on sugar and other agricultural products is rooted in colonialism and slavery, which are skipped over in a few pages. Its more recent move into 'labour intensive' manufacturing industries controlled by foreign firms has been part of a worldwide movement of less skilled manual jobs towards low-wage countries, as a result of the incessant drive of capitalist firms to cut costs and increase profits. The other side of this coin was the invitation of West Indians to Britain, the US, and elsewhere to provide cheap labour in the home countries of imperialism – so that now, for example, less than half of all Jamaicans actually live in Jamaica.

But even these developments have been unable to sustain the profitability of international capitalism. And the consequence now is the deepening crisis in the imperialist world, with the greatest part of the burden of the crisis thrown onto the oppressed countries, particularly the poor of the oppressed countries, and those of their people living in the imperialist countries. The authors note the slowdown of foreign investment and emigration, but have no real explanation for it, or indeed of any of the Caribbean's problems.

Despite this shortcoming, and a somewhat academic style, the book is a treasure-house of information.

Dave Hunter

IRA ATTACKS

The month of August was ushered in with direct ruler Douglas Hurd claiming the IRA 'are on the defensive'. Observers of Britain's rule in the north of Ireland will note he is not the first to express such optimism and true to form the IRA have given it the response it deserves. No sooner had Hurd's words passed into oblivion than on 28 July a huge 1000lb bomb was again placed inside the security cordon around Belfast city centre. The blast destroyed two court buildings in Chichester Street shattering windows in the vicinity that had only recently been replaced after the last such IRA assault.

In the recent period a new aspect to IRA strategy has emerged. As well as attacks on economic and military targets collaborators with the occupying forces have been warned that they are legitimate targets. An IRA statement in the 15 August issue of *An Phoblacht/Republican News* delivered a final warning.

'We are of the opinion that the contractors involved are assisting the British in re-inforcing their illegal and immoral presence'. The first collaborator to pay the price for ignoring this warning was Seamus McAvoy, a wealthy County Tyrone businessman, who was shot for supplying equipment for police stations. Malcolm Ellis

MAIRE O'SHEA DROP THE CHARGES

The Maire O'Shea Support Committee has decided on Saturday 9 November for its national demonstration in Birmingham. The main demand will be the dropping of the charges against Maire O'Shea. FRFI calls on all its readers to support the march and to get others to do so. The list of sponsors already includes MPs, Jeremy Corbyn, Chris Smith and Dafydd Elis Thomas, and Councillors Ken Livingstone and Ted Knight.

It is astonishing to hear that Birmingham MP, Clare Short - who is a sponsor of the O'Shea campaign - has refused to sponsor the demonstration. Apparently she does not believe the event will be successful. Her decision certainly won't help make it so.

The London support committee held a successful picket of the Home Office on 15 August and will be there again on 29 August. In proposing these events, the ISM argued for a regular fortnightly picket and a stepping up of public activity. New people are welcome (see below). Donations are urgently needed for the defence fund towards legal expenses of possibly £60,000.

Tony Sheridan

Contact local committees: 448 Stratford Rd, Birmingham B11 4AE (donations to the Dr Maire O'Shea Defence Fund); Box 3, 136 Kingsland High St, London E8; 2 Woodcock Sq, Hulme, Manchester M15.

- Drop the charges against Maire O'Shea!
- Support the Birmingham Demonstration 9 November!

SOVIET YOUTH SOLIDARITY

Republicans from the Six Counties recently attended an anti-imperialist festival in Moscow - they were part of the Irish delegation and joined with hundreds of thousands of others to celebrate the theme 'Peace and friendship, youth and students'. They took two exhibitions with them - 'Belfast Exposed' and one on plastic bullets - to show the reality of life under British imperialist domination. Fianna Fail, Fine Gael and the Workers Party delegates were outraged that the Soviet people might find out what was really happening in the Six Counties (and with 'Free State' consent!). In true pro-imperialist style they put aside their party differences and, united in anti-Republicanism, demanded that the two exhibitions be removed from the Irish section. The Irish section was closed down. It was the Soviet youth organisation which demonstrated true internationalism and solidarity. They displayed the 'Belfast Exposed' exhibition in their head-quarters with the result that many more people saw photos of British rule in Ireland.

Pauline Sellars



Daily police harassment; arrest, assault and intimidation; people hospitalised after police have beaten them; people then charged with assault of police; young men detained in custody, threatened as police attempt to force them to inform on friends; thugs roam streets attacking homes and families; men shot by armed thugs. It should be headline news - but it isn't. MPs should be demanding inquiries and explanations - but they're not. The reason - it's Ireland where the daily harassment and intimidation of the nationalist people in the Six Counties is censored, distorted and lied about by the British press and media.

The facts

17 July

- priest and elderly parents stopped at UDR checkpoint in Fermanagh. Abused verbally and physically. RUC arrest and detain priest. Charge with 'obstruction'.
- Kieran Smiley arrested by RUC. Home ransacked. Offered £10 per week

to inform on friends.

20 July

- two Loyalists attack home of nationalist family. Smash windows with bottles containing bullets and threatening notes.

21 July

- a dozen Loyalists attack and assault a nationalist woman.
- two nationalist women sacked after

employer received threats from Loyalists not to employ nationalists - or else.

26 July

- nationalist family stopped by RUC. Car searched. Father refuses to leave hatch-back boot open for fear the cold will affect his new-born baby. Assaulted by the RUC and arrested. Wife and baby left by roadside. He is then charged with assault, obstruction and resisting arrest.

- five nationalists stopped by RUC and Army foot patrol in Falls Road, Belfast. Kicked, shoved. One man hit with baton for defending himself. Passing RUC patrol joins in. One man needs five stitches in his eye. The five charged with assault, obstruction and resisting arrest.

29 July

- armed Loyalists shoot and seriously wound Frankie Tennyson, Portadown Sinn Féin member. Coincided with UDA threats of 'a campaign of attacks on prominent Republicans'.

5 August

- Tony O'Callaghan brutally assaulted by RUC patrol. Left semi-conscious. Hospitalised with dislocated shoulder, bruising and strained neck.

- Margaret Hogan, Sinn Féin councillor, and four friends stopped and verbally abused at UDR checkpoint. Car windows smashed. The five held for three hours.

15 August

- Sam Hartley of Sinn Féin detained by RUC. Accused of stealing tyres he had just bought.

- Eamon Morris, harassed by the RUC for more than a year to turn informer. Stopped by RUC, punched and kicked in RUC van - fell unconscious.

A few instances of the daily RUC, UDR and Loyalist attacks unleashed on the nationalist people of the Six Counties - and censored by the British press. The British Labour Party, so eager to condemn IRA attacks and praise the police for charging PTA detainees, never mentions the official terrorism of the RUC and UDR and the brutal sectarian attacks of Loyalists. The TUC made front page news when it condemned the miners for fighting back but when has Willis condemned the RUC for the terror it inflicts on the Irish people? By their silence and inaction they stand responsible for the actions of British imperialism in Ireland.

PTA prisoners strip searched

Eleven Irish people are facing charges following the PTA arrests in June amidst press hysteria, orchestrated by Sir Kenneth Newman, about a seaside bombing campaign. Two of the women held are being regularly strip searched on remand in the all male remand prison, Brixton.

In a statement issued on 15 August, Martin McGuinness, Sinn Féin's elected representative for Derry, says: 'I have received a letter today from Martina Anderson, a young Derry woman on remand in Brixton prison, outlining the treatment that she and remand prisoner Ella O'Dwyer, County Tipperary, are suffering on a daily basis. Martina has informed me that in the space of five days, 5-10 August, she has had to endure ten strip searches, 34 body searches and one cell change. Ella O'Dwyer is also being strip searched and suffering similar harassment.'

This sort of treatment, while not surprising from the British prison regime, serves no purpose other than to humiliate and degrade the women remand prisoners. The two are the only women being held in Brixton, which is notorious on many counts including the force-feeding for 166 days of the Price sisters in 1973-74, on hunger strike for 213 days demanding repatriation to Ireland. Following protests the two women are no longer being strip searched before every court appearance. They are on lock-up 21½ hours daily.

Three other women have now been bailed, having been held in Holloway. They are: Una Lowney, Mrs Frances

Boyle and her daughter Mrs Eileen McShane. Mrs McShane's husband Sean is held in Brixton. Mrs Boyle's son, John, is in Wormwood Scrubs. Joseph Magee, Peter Sherry, Gerald McDonnell and Donal Craig are the final four. Magee, McDonnell, Sherry, Anderson, O'Dwyer and Craig are charged with conspiracy to cause explosions. Magee is also charged with the Brighton bombing, possession of explosives and five counts of murder. Lowney and Boyle are charged with withholding information about 'an act of terrorism relating to Northern Ireland affairs between 1 April and 24 June this year.'

The prospect of a large number of Irish men and women being convicted and swelling the ranks of Irish political prisoners in British prisons makes it all the more urgent to campaign in support of the POWs and their demands. Make your voice heard: protest to the Home Office and the Governor of Brixton Prison, protest to your MP. If you wish to be more active, contact FRFI and the Irish Solidarity Movement. FRFI sends solidarity greetings to all those charged, who are now facing the inevitability of the charade of justice we have come to expect in Irish show trials.

Tony Sheridan

Scottish police harassment

In a major attack on the democratic right to free speech on Ireland and the right to conduct political activity in solidarity with the Irish people, police in Glasgow and Strathclyde are using the Prevention of Terrorism Act to arrest, harass and intimidate political activists.

On Saturday 24 August a 77 year old man, a Spanish Civil War veteran, was arrested on an Irish march in Carfin, West Scotland and charged under Section 2 of the PTA as follows: 'He carried a document entitled "Ireland's War" in such a way and circumstances as to arouse suspicion that he was a member or supporter of a proscribed organisation, namely the IRA, contrary to Section 2 of the PTA'. 'Ireland's War' is the newspaper produced by the Glasgow Irish Freedom Action Committee (GIFAC). His trial date was set for 17 February 1986. A week earlier supporters of the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP) and Irish Freedom Movement (IFM) were arrested whilst selling the RCP book 'The Irish War'; they were apparently extensively questioned about the IFM, GIFAC and the Irish Solidarity Movement, charged with breach of the peace offences and released.

On Wednesday 28 August an FRFI supporter was stopped and searched by police whilst selling FRFI and leafletting at Parkhead Football Stadium. She was told by police that 'we have reason to believe you were carrying proscribed material' and they took copies of the ISM campaigning leaflet and the ISM 5 October Day of Action leaflet.

British terror on the streets of the Six Counties goes on unabated - we must be armed with the facts and go out to break the silence, the censorship, lies and distortions.

Pauline Sellars

ISM Delegation - Thoughts on Belfast

It was the first time I went to Northern Ireland and saw the situation of an occupied country, a new, essential and shocking experience! There is a big difference between picketing the South African Embassy in Trafalgar Square with 'just police' present, and marching along the Falls Road with army present and guns pointing at you... I must confess I felt quite uneasy shouting 'troops out of Ireland' in the very presence of those troops lining the streets. But I discovered many amazing things in Belfast - the really fantastic way of living together and helping each other in the nationalist areas. Support for the Republican Movement, resistance, are the main purposes uniting the nationalist community... a tradition passed on to the children. Although the area of Ballymurphy is in a terrible state - houses damaged, rubbish everywhere - it is not a sad place, because the people living there are still able to defend their rights and find ways of keeping up the struggle for freedom. I'm sure this first visit to Belfast won't be my last one - I'm glad I joined the delegation.

Barbara

Irish POWs' birthdays

The following Irish Republican prisoners have forthcoming birthdays. FRFI sends our greetings and we ask readers to send cards, preferably recorded delivery, to ensure their arrival.

Richard Glenholmes, B32955, HM Prison Long Lartin, South Littleton, Evesham, Worcestershire, WR11 5TZ. 19 September.
Martin Brady, 119087, HM Prison Long Lartin (as above), 22 September.
Vince Donnelly, 274064, HM Prison, Love Lane, Wakefield, Yorkshire, WF2 9AG. 25 September.

Pauline Sellars

STOP PRESS

On Saturday 31 August GIFAC called a public stand against the police at Parkhead Football Stadium - supported by FRFI and the ISM. The RCP said they would support this stand but on the day, following instructions from the police, they stood as far away from GIFAC, FRFI and the ISM sellers as possible. They proved themselves ready to accept the police's every whim. An FRFI supporter was dragged from a queue of Celtic fans by the police who attempted to confiscate her papers. However, the outrage of the Celtic supporters at this harassment stopped the police in their tracks. FRFI, the ISM and GIFAC showed that it is possible, by united action, to stand up to police censorship on Ireland.

Kim, Glasgow

Fighting Brittan's prisons

Hardly a day goes by without some smooth-tongued wealthy Tory apologist explaining why 'we' cannot afford hospitals for the working class sick, schools for working class children, jobs, homes, or wages people can live on. Yet there is one area of life in Thatcher's Britain where there is, it seems, no limit to what 'we' can afford: prisons.

Leon Brittan, Home Secretary, has embarked on the biggest prison building programme this century. He plans to spend £350 million on 16 new prisons to incarcerate 7,700 more prisoners. The Tory government is already prepared to spend nearly £25,000 per year to keep one prisoner in a maximum security prison as well as paying prison officers an average of £257 per week (1984: making prison officers the highest paid manual workers in Britain) to manage the biggest and most inhuman prison system in Europe. More and more money is being spent to keep more and more of the working class and oppressed behind bars and with fewer and fewer rights.

PRISONERS FIGHT BACK 1983-5

January 1983: Parkhurst prison siege
May 1983: Albany rooftop protest
June 1983: Wormwood Scrubs D Wing protest
January 1984: Peterhead rooftop protest
February 1984: Durham H Wing hunger strike
July 1985: Holloway protest

Since October 1983 there has been a steady escalation of repression in the prisons. In that month Brittan announced to the savage glee of the Tory Party Conference, restrictions in parole rights: prisoners convicted of certain categories of murder (mainly those directed against the state or its agents) would serve at least 20 years; prisoners sentenced to more than 5 years for 'crimes of violence' would have no right to parole. This policy has already begun to bite. In the first six months of 1983 113 prisoners serving sentences of more than 5 years for 'crimes of violence' were given parole; in the first six months of 1984 only 13 such prisoners got parole. Two prisoners have committed suicide because of the denial of parole. Since then Brittan has increased the number of cells in local prisons for use as solitary cells under Circular Instruction 10/74 and extended the brutal 'short, sharp, shock' regime to all youth Detention Centres in England and Wales. In July 1984 the Control Review Committee Report called for new special units to isolate subversive prisoners. Brittan immediately announced that the Report would be implemented. A number of prisons have been identified as possible sites for the new units: Lincoln, Parkhurst, Leicester and, more speculatively, Bedford and H Wing Durham.



Paul Worrell 'suicide', Brixton prison 12 January 1982. 1984-9 deaths in Brixton, 14% of all prison deaths. 5 of those were 'suicides', 20% fatal 'suicides' for all prisons. There are 115 prisons in Wales and England.

Prisons: a weapon against the poor

In the last year the prison population has soared from 42,091 (August 1984) to 48,111—an increase of 6,020. The sharp increase in the number of prisoners coupled with the increase in repression reveals Brittan's plans for the working class.

British class society is in economic, social and political crisis. As more and more people are driven into poverty then more and more will rebel against intolerable conditions. Some will respond by taking back for themselves some of the wealth plundered from the working class: they will go into Brittan's prisons. Some will engage in political resistance to the decaying imperialist state and its accompanying racism, national oppression and poverty: they will also go into Brittan's prisons. As the crisis deepens more and more sections of the working class and oppressed will find that defending themselves is a 'criminal' offence. The prison system is being built up as a weapon against working class resistance.



Inside Wormwood Scrubs

Already the prisons contain Irish political prisoners, prisoners politicised whilst in prison, striking miners, peace campaigners, animal rights campaigners and others. The ruling class fears the possibility of political organisation developing inside the prisons uniting Irish, black, working class, women and others. So it is getting ready to isolate the 'subversives': the prisoners who give a lead to resistance within the prisons. It hopes to create a prison system of such barbarity that prisoners will be intimidated into submission whilst at the same time providing special isolation units to remove those prisoners who refuse to be intimidated. The purpose of all this is to strike fear into the working class and oppressed: fear of prison. Therefore the increasing repression against resisting prisoners. For when prisoners show that the system can be fought then the weapon of fear is destroyed for the whole working class.

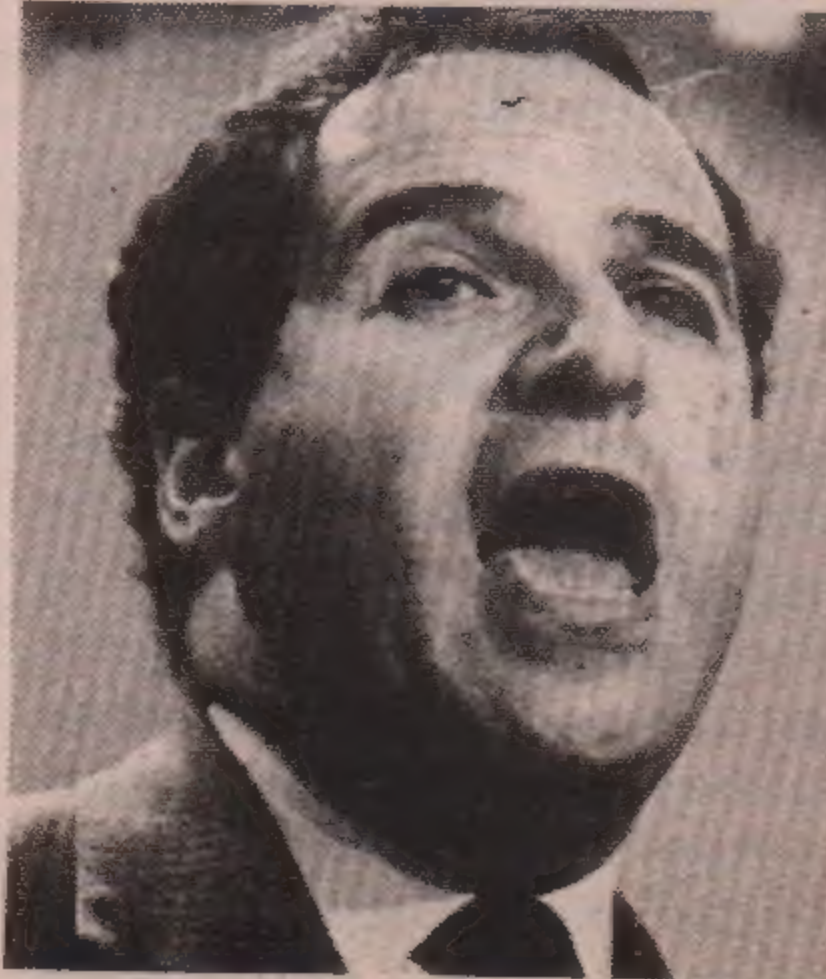
DEATHS IN PRISON

Year	Total	Suicides	% Suicides
1982	61	17	28
1983	64	21	33
1984	64	25	39
1985*	32	19	59

* Estimated figure up to August supplied by Inquest—the actual figures could be higher.

COST OF PRISONS (1983-4)

Type of prison	Ave cost per prisoner	Per week	Per year
Maximum security	£478	£24,856	
Womens prisons	£330	£17,160	
Youth (open)	£283	£14,716	
Youth (closed)	£254	£13,208	
Category B	£239	£12,428	
Local and remand	£216	£11,232	
Category C	£178	£ 9,256	
Adult open	£144	£ 7,488	
ALL	£234	£12,168	



Home Secretary—Leon Brittan

UK: HIGHEST NUMBER OF PRISONERS IN WESTERN EUROPE

Country	Total number of people imprisoned during year (1982)	per 100,000
UK	152,248	274
Belgium	21,196	212
Italy	128,846	207
West Germany	123,395	199
Holland	23,900	184
Spain	56,730	153
France	74,427	140
Portugal	7,762	78

SIX COUNTIES: LAND OF PRISONS

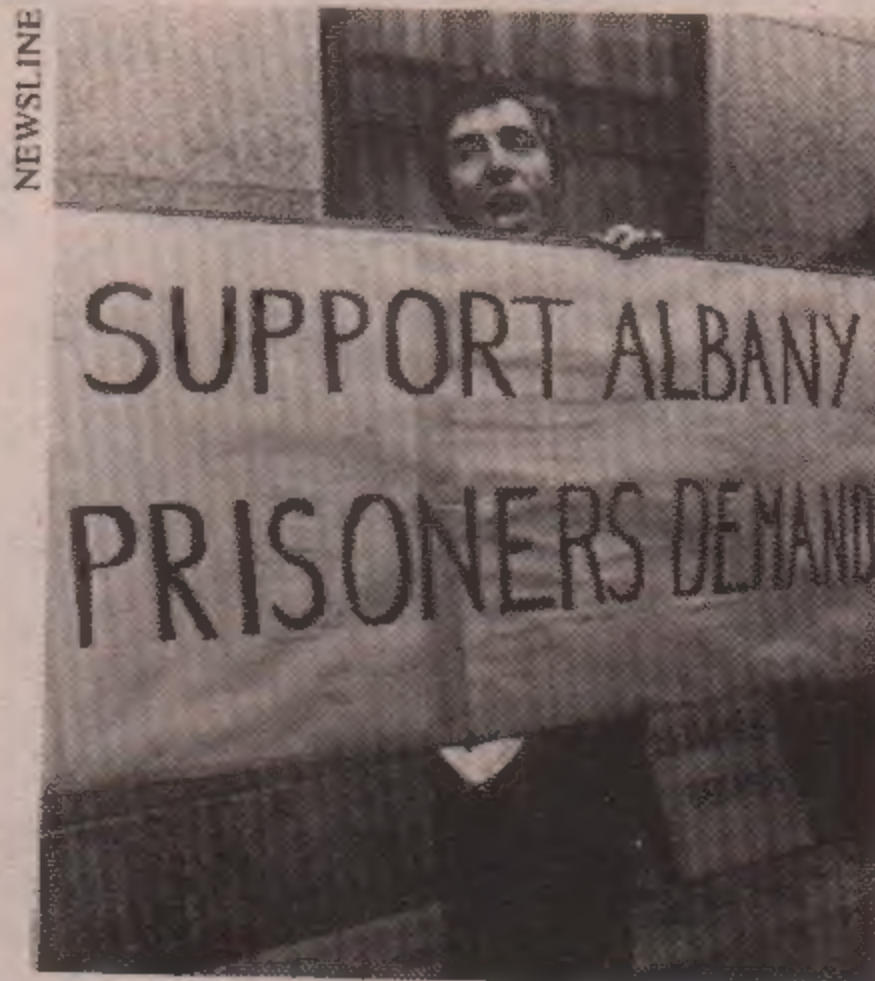
In the late 70s it was estimated that the Six Counties had, proportionally, the second highest prison population in the world—second to apartheid South Africa. In 1983, it had, proportionally, nearly twice as many prisoners as the UK as a whole—the UK itself having the highest number in Western Europe.

	Ave daily prison population	Per 100,000
England and Wales	43,500	90
Scotland	5,052	101
Six Counties	2,453	164
UK Total	51,005	93

Organise now

The facts and figures on this page show the reality of the prison system. And that it is getting worse: more prisoners; more deaths; more suicides; more repression. It is also clear that the ruling class will spend any money necessary to perfect its prisons as houses of terror against the working class. Only organised political resistance can combat this process.

Prisoners are fighting back. Both in



BISM picket in support of Albany protest 1983

the men's and women's prisons protests have taken place either against particular aspects of the system or the system itself. As repression increases these protests will multiply and in the process of struggle new forms of prisoner organisation must develop. The fight against denial of parole, against the new isolation units, to name but two major issues, demands that prisoners begin to develop their own organisation to co-ordinate and strengthen resistance.

And outside the prisons it is increasingly urgent that all who are engaged in struggle against the state, in whatever form, begin to join with the prisoners in opposing the prison system and fighting for the democratic rights of prisoners. Organised resistance inside the prisons and organised solidarity with prisoners outside can together break the weapon of fear. Every victory gained against the British prison system is a victory for the working class and oppressed as a whole. As black prisoner Shujaa Moshesh wrote in FRFI 47:

'The Tory message to the militant sections of the working class, those both inside and outside prison is simple: "submit or be crushed". We must shout back again and again, "We shall resist, we cannot be broken."'

Terry O'Halloran

STOP PRESS... Spike Island

On Saturday 31 August prisoners in Fort Mitchell, a Free State youth prison on Spike Island off the coast of Cork, rose up. They drove out prison officers, burned down major parts of the prison and took control of parts of the island itself. Troops were rushed in to quell the revolt. Late on the Sunday night, 1 September, the prisoners surrendered. A spokesperson for the prisoners said that their intention was to make the prison uninhabitable.

URGENT! URGENT! URGENT!...

We need money urgently to pay for our work in support of prisoners.

We send FRFI to 155 prisoners in England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland (Six Counties and Twenty-Six Counties), USA, Netherlands and Italy. This costs well over £500 a year.

The Thatcher government has hundreds of millions of pounds to spend on building more prisons to lock up working class and oppressed people. Only you can make sure that we can carry on sending our political material to prisoners and so put up resistance to ruling class repression.

• Pay for a subscription to FRFI for a prisoner

• Pay for a book for a prisoner

• Send a regular monthly donation

Donations, cheques/POs (payable to Larkin Publications) should be sent to: FRFI, BCM Box 5809, London WC1N 3XX

THE FRAMING OF ALAN LEE BYRNE

The family and friends of Alan Lee Byrne are planning a campaign to prove his innocence leading up to a forthcoming appeal. Alan was found guilty with Richard Trump, at the Old Bailey on 20 June, of murder of a security guard, attempted robbery and possession of a firearm. They must serve a minimum of 20 years under Brittan's parole rules. Alan has protested his innocence for months whilst on remand and this case is yet another example of police/courts frame up.

Three main glaring faults in police 'evidence' stand out. Firstly, the only actual 'evidence' to link Alan with the robbery was his fingerprints on an envelope found at the scene, with no explanation as to how it got there. Secondly, witnesses say that the person who killed the guard was short, in his 20s and thin. Alan is heavily built, six foot tall in his 30s and with tattoos on his arms. Not one witness could remember seeing these.

Thirdly, Alan had been under police surveillance since March 1983 after being acquitted of another 'crime' police had tried to frame him with. He had been forced to move house four times during that time because of their daily harassment. No one, knowing they were being watched that closely would even think of carrying out a robbery. And, as Alan has pointed out, the police were at all times trying desperately to frame him for exposing their lies in the previous case.

Alan still maintains his innocence and FRFI sends greetings and solidarity to him and his family and friends in their struggle for justice.

Alexa Byrne

Please send cards and messages to Alan Lee Byrne, B71850, HM Prison Wormwood Scrubs, Du Cane Road, W12 0AE

Eusif Ryan

The inquest into the death of black prisoner Eusif Ryan in Wandsworth prison (see FRFI 50 & 51) will be held at Horseferry Road Coroners Court, London SW1, on Wednesday 25 September. FRFI has recently received more information on his death but we again appeal to prisoners who know anything about Eusif's death to get their information to us as soon as possible. Some prisoners have already said they are prepared to give evidence at the inquest. The more who come forward, the more chance there is of the truth being brought out.

Solitary

In March Irish POW Sean Kinsella was ghosted from Frankland maximum security prison to Armley Leeds for 28 days solitary confinement under C1 10/74. Back in Frankland for 10 days, he was then ghosted to Durham for another 28 days solitary. Back to Frankland again where he was immediately placed into solitary under Rule 43/2 (good order and discipline). He was been told that he will remain in solitary for the rest of his stay in Frankland. No reason has been given. Other Irish POWs known, or suspected, to be in solitary at the moment are: Paul Norney, Vince Donnelly, Billy Armstrong, Roy Walsh, Eddie Byrne and Eddie O'Neill.

John Bowden is still in solitary in Hull. He has spent two years and 8 months, except for 3 weeks in Gartree in July 1984, in solitary. Ronnie Menzies is presently in solitary in Wandsworth prison. He has been in continuous solitary confinement since July 1984—14 months. Mark Leech, has 'disappeared' on the ghost train from prison to prison. FRFI has been informed that he was badly beaten recently but his present whereabouts are unknown.

Conference Against Police Repression

Saturday 14 September
Haringey Community Centre,
Brabant Road, London N22
(nearest tube Wood Green)
Speakers include: Newham
Monitoring Project, City AA,
NOMPAS, BUAV, Gays the
Word, Stop the City, IBRG, the
peace convoy and others.
Videos on show all afternoon
Creche available, disabled
access
Organised by Campaign Against
Police Repression

Leeds

Friends of Rose Alaso

Campaign to fight against Rose's
deportation
Meets every Friday, 7pm
Leeds Civic Centre
Demonstration in support of
Rose Alaso
Saturday 19 October – further
details to be announced

Public Meeting

Repeal the PTA

Tuesday 29 October, 8pm
Leeds Trades Club, Savile Mount,
Leeds 7
Speaker Maire O'Shea
Organised by Leeds Anti-PTA
Group

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ANTI-APARTHEID EVENTS

Manchester

Smash Apartheid! Smash Racism!

**Close Down South African
Airways Office**
Weekly picket every Saturday
10am-12 noon
South African Airways, Peter
Street, Manchester
Organised by Manchester
Campaign Against South African
Airways

Sheffield

Demonstrate Against Apartheid

Saturday 28 September
Assemble 10.30am at Caborn
Corner (off Spital Hill), Sheffield

International Solidarity Rally Against Apartheid

Saturday 28 September 2pm
Lower Refectory, Students Union,
University of Sheffield
Speakers invited include:
SWAPO, ANC, Black
Consciousness Movement, PAC,
Dunnes Strikers, also speakers
from Ireland, Chile, Palestine,
Fight Racism! Fight
Imperialism!, Newham 7, NUM,
Women Against Pit Closures,
Pakistani Workers Association,
Rose Alaso and others. Creche-
Stalls-Food-Music. Organised by
Yorkshire Campaign for Action
Against Apartheid. Coaches from
Leeds – 8.30am from the Corn
Exchange

Yorkshire Campaign for Action Against Apartheid

Campaign meetings Tuesday 17
September, 1 and 15 October
7.30pm, Common Ground, 87 the
Wicker, Sheffield.
Confirm by writing and for more
information: YCAAA, 87 The
Wicker, Sheffield

Leeds

Smash Apartheid! Sanctions Now!

Mobile Picket, Saturday 14
September, 11am-3pm
Starts at Barclays Bank, Merriem
Centre, Leeds.
Organised by Leeds FRFI

End British Collaboration with Apartheid

Picket Barclays Bank
Saturday 7 and 21 September
10.30am – 1.30pm
Corner of Vicar Lane and
Headrow
Organised by Leeds FRFI

London

Islington Rally Against Apartheid

Monday 23 September 7.30pm
Islington Town Hall, Upper St, N1
Speakers confirmed so far: A
representative from SWAPO,
Zolile Keke – Chief
Representative of the PAC,
Councillor Valerie Veness
(Islington Council Labour Group),
Charine James (Fight Racism!
Fight Imperialism!), Jeremy
Corbyn MP, Union of Turkish
Progressives in Britain. Others
invited include Islington Anti-
Apartheid Group
Sponsors so far: Islington
Council Labour Group, Islington
Joint Trades Council, Fight
Racism! Fight Imperialism!,
Partizans, Union of Turkish
Progressives in Britain, Gays and
Lesbians Against Apartheid
Imperialism and Racism,
Islington Gutter Press, Nags
Head Claimants Union, Irish
Solidarity Movement, Islington
Miners Support Group, Anti-
Deportation Campaign (Steering
Committee)

Edinburgh

Isolate Apartheid! Sanctions Now!

Picket Barclays Bank
Every Thursday 5-6pm
St Andrews Square, Edinburgh
Organised by Edinburgh FRFI

Political reformism

Dear FRFI

... I can certainly understand and
imagine the sense and feeling of polit-
ical demoralisation that the end of
the miners' strike generated amongst
the organised far left out there. To
hear Scargill calling for support for a
Labour Government under scab Kin-
nock must be a double body blow to
all those, myself included, who at
least believed or hoped that the
miners and their more principled
leaders would have absorbed certain
fundamental political lessons from
the strike. I find it totally incompre-
hensible how after a strike of open
class war proportions where the real
nature of the capitalist state was
revealed and where the traitorous
allies of the ruling class openly
showed themselves, the defeated
miners' leaders and significant num-
bers of miners themselves can still
nevertheless support the clearly
exposed myth inherent in reformist
politics and the scabs and traitors
who benefit from and perpetuate that
opportunistic myth.

I think the reality is that the organ-
ised labour and trade union move-
ment is so thoroughly and totally
rooted in political reformism that no
degree of direct experience in open
and, on the whole, involuntary class
struggle is capable of significantly
changing its mentality. Which lends
even greater truth and urgency to
David Reed's contention, extremely
eloquently put in the 'People Versus
State' article (FRFI 51), that the real
forces and vanguard of revolutionary
class struggle in Britain must be
sought beyond the ever declining
organisational parameters of the tra-
ditional working class labour move-
ment...

John Bowden

HM Prison Hull

(Except for 3 weeks in July 1984,
John Bowden has been in continuous
solitary confinement since January
1983. 2 years and eight months)

Come and join us

Dear RCG,
Having just read the last issue of
the paper *Fight Racism! Fight
Imperialism!*, I noticed the article
by Carol Brickley of the Revolution-
ary Communist Group. I read the
article with great interest as I find
the views expressed in the article
are the same as my own views.

Although only 15, and just about
to go into the 5th year in my school,
I have been interested in politics
for some time, and specifically
socialism and communism. I feel
that I am in affinity with the
remarks written in the article con-
cerning imperialism etc... I do not
know what the RCG's views are on
many topics but I would like to
learn... Unless unsuitable, I would
like to join RCG, or, if possible, be
sent information concerning the
RCG and the views it believes in.
Yours sincerely
Diarmid F
(Scotland)

Sectarianism still strong

Dear Editor

Sectarianism remains a strong force
in British left politics. It is so difficult
to build unity, yet so easy to destroy it
through sectarian actions. The Irish
Solidarity Movement has been con-
fronted by sectarianism time and
time again in our efforts to promote
unity in solidarity work in Britain.
July and August unfortunately saw
more instances.

The first involves Proletarian, a
small organisation in the ISM. Nomi-
nally they had 3 members in the South
London Irish Solidarity Committee,
though they played no role whatever
in 1985, neither attending the AGM
nor reaffiliating for 1985, nor attend-
ing committee meetings, until they
turned up in force to the meeting of 8
July.

As chair I allowed the nine Prole-
tarian members to attend the meeting,
though only three were ~~SLISC~~ mem-
bers. At 9.45pm they produced for
the first time a ready-typed and pho-
tocopied letter and resolution dated 8
July, which stated that it had been
discussed and passed by this very
night's meeting of SLISC! The reso-
lution attacked the RCG and the ISM
for alleged sectarian, undemocratic

behaviour! I pointed out the obvious
lack of time to discuss such a matter
and offered to take it at the next
meeting. With the town hall chimes
tolling 10pm, they stood up with their
hands in the air, claimed a vote to be
taken and walked out!

The second incident relates to the
first, for this pathetic manoeuvre was
reproduced in a deceitful way by the
Ireland's War Support Group Glas-
gow-based editors of *Ireland's War*.
The IWSG chose to report an internal
ISM dispute without making any
effort to establish the facts. I would
make it clear that the London branch
of IWSG has opposed previous sec-
tarian attacks on the RCG and the
ISM in *Ireland's War* and such at-
tacks had stopped in recent months.
The ISM has done nothing whatever
to provoke such an act from the Glas-
gow editors of *IW*.

Over the past year in London we
have worked together with the IWSG
on a number of events, such as the
Leicester mobilisation for Bloody
Sunday. To Proletarian we say, stop
the childish antics and start working
with us. To IWSG we say stop the
cheap sectarian attacks on the ISM.

Finally, the RCP/Irish Freedom
Movement's 10 August march: the
ISM wrote to the organisers sponsor-
ing their London march and we ex-
plained that *we would be unable to
mobilise numbers for the march, be-
cause of the ISM delegation to Bel-
fast that same anti-internment week-
end*. Four of us attended the march
with the SLISC banner. Apart from
Hackney NALGO and Newham
Asian Association banners, SLISC
was the only other non-RCP/IFM
contingent on the march. Yet we were
refused the courtesy of a solidarity
message at the concluding rally. The
reason: they accused us of not mobi-
lising for the march! It is unfortu-
nately true that the IFM have refused
even to acknowledge sponsorship
requests for our own events, let alone
support them. However, it remains
our policy to support all initiatives on
Ireland called on a principled basis.

The unceasing sectarian behaviour
in Irish solidarity work in Britain
makes the work of Kitson, Newman
and their special branch agents a real
'doddle'. I appeal once more to those
active in solidarity work to cooperate
in unity and to end sectarianism.

Tony Sheridan

(SLISC chair, ISM executive)

Filthy lies?

Dear FRFI

In your article 'Anti Apartheid or
Anti-Action?' (FRFI No 51) you say
that 'In Sheffield a motion by Shef-
field Asian Youth Movement was
blocked by Richard Caborn MP
and Paul Blomfield.'

As the mover of the motion I
would like to point out that I
withdrew it. The motion was *not*
blocked. Whilst it is true that
the motion's seconder, Mustaq
Mamood is in the AYM, I am not
and have never been an AYM mem-
ber, so it cannot be accurately de-
scribed as an 'AYM resolution'.

May I suggest that in future you
check your facts, and I hope you
print this letter in order to put the
record straight. Otherwise it would
be easy to use your mistake to
accuse you of 'peddling filthy lies'
(your phrase not mine).

Yours

Sam A Franklin

FRFI: Two points only. Firstly, Mr
Franklin's belief that we would
cancel his letter is unfounded. We
do not have to rely on censorship,
distortion or lies to back up our
standpoint on any issue, whatever
charges are levelled against us by
those more familiar with this kind
of politics. Secondly we ask the
one question that Mr Franklin, de-
spite his angry denials of censor-
ship in the Sheffield AA group, fails
to answer. Why did he withdraw
the motion? Richard Caborn, as
chair of the meeting had refused to
allow it to be debated – Mr Frank-
lin withdrew it without consul-
tation with the AYM who were
seconding it (and had in fact
instigated it).

Please help a prisoner

Dear FRFI,

I am writing to you on behalf of my
husband Oliver Francis Davidson.

He wrote you three letters but he says
he doesn't know for sure whether or
not you will have received them. He
said he had also only received three
papers from you in the past. My hus-
band has had nothing but aggro from
prison officers at different prisons
except for Hull. He's now at Man-
chester and has been for quite a few
weeks now. He's had his life threat-
ened by prison staff, and getting
nothing but abuse from them.

When they push him from prison
to prison he's taken in the 'A' van
which is top security, which is all
wrong. He's locked up for twenty
four hours a day, most days, he
doesn't have the long-term privileges
that he should be having. And I'm so
frightened that something is going to
happen to him the way he's been
treated, it all boils down to him being
Irish. I wonder if you can do any-
thing to help him in any way. I'm out
of my mind with worry about my
husband, and I know he's just about
at his wit's end, he can do nothing
because his hands are tied.

Yours faithfully

Mrs Audrey Davidson

FRFI has not received any of the
three letters Oliver has sent us.
Readers are urged to send messages
of support to: Oliver Davidson,
G64259, Strangeways Prison,
Southall Street, Manchester.

CPGB and WRP Censorship

Dear Comrades

Over the last few months in Glasgow,
two of the 'political' bookshops have
refused to stock any books published
by Larkin Publications. This is blat-
ant censorship of political material
by the owners of the two bookshops,
the Communist Party of Great Brit-
ain (Clyde Books, Parnie Street,
Glasgow) and the Workers Revolution-
ary Party (Hope Street Book-
shop, Hope Street, Glasgow). Both
have refused to give reasons for their
censorship, apart from lies like 'there
isn't enough room on the shelves'.
The real reason is clear: both the
CPGB and the WRP are scared of
and viciously opposed to the revolu-
tionary positions put forward by the
RCG, particularly in 'Ireland: the
key to the British revolution'. This
particular publication has been a big
seller in Hope Street Bookshop
(WRP); there has been great interest
in it amongst many groups and
individuals in Glasgow.

We urge all readers to write to the
bookshops mentioned, condemning
their censorship, and ask readers and
supporters of FRFI in Glasgow to
visit the bookshops asking why these
books are not being stocked

Gareth J

Glasgow

FRFI SUPPORTER GROUPS

meet regularly in the following areas to plan and carry out our
work – education, discussion, funds, sales and campaigns are
all on the agenda.
JOIN US!

LEEDS

Next meeting Thursday 19 September with discussion on Latin America
and then on Thursday 3 and 17 October. Leeds Trades Club, Savile Mount,
Leeds 7 at 7.30pm.
For further information contact: Box FRFI, 59 Cookridge Street, Leeds 2

EDINBURGH

Meets regularly to discuss the politics of the Revolutionary Communist
Group and plan our activities. Forthcoming discussions on:
PTA – Public Order Act – Unite to defend democratic rights, Communism
and British imperialism
For details contact:
Edinburgh FRFI, c/o Box 40, 43 Candlemaker Row, Edinburgh

SOUTH LONDON

Meets fortnightly on Tuesdays at the North Peckham Civic Centre, corner
of Old Kent Road & Peckham Park Road, 7.30pm. SPECIAL: Next meeting
Tuesday 10 September on Uganda with a speaker from the Uganda
National Liberation Front (Anti-Dictatorship). For details contact: South
London FRFI, BM Box 4835, London WC1N 3XX

GLASGOW

Meets every fortnight on a Tuesday. For details contact FRFI sellers or
write to FRFI Box 10, 340 West Prince's St, Glasgow

BRADFORD

meets fortnightly on Mondays. For details contact Bradford FRFI, c/o 6
Edmund St, Bradford 5

NORTH LONDON

Meets fortnightly on Tuesdays at 7.30pm at the Red Rose Centre, 129
Seven Sisters Road, London N7 (Finsbury Park tube or Buses 253 and 29).
SPECIAL: Next meeting on Tuesday 10 September with Barrister James
Wood speaking to the meeting on 'The Public Order Act and Police and
Criminal Evidence Bill'

DUNDEE

Meets fortnightly on Mondays at 7.30pm. Next meeting 9 September. For
details contact: Dundee FRFI, PO Box 27, Dundee DD1 9DR

MANCHESTER

Meets fortnightly on Thursdays at Slade Lane Neighbourhood Centre,
Slade Lane, Longsight, Manchester 12. For further details contact:
Manchester FRFI, Box 38, 434 Corn Exchange Buildings, Hanging Ditch,
Manchester M4 4BN.

FRFI FUND: WE NEED £500 A MONTH

JULY & AUGUST: £1162.86

Our appeal in last month's issue to our readers and FRFI
Supporters Groups for contributions to the FRFI Fund Drive got
a very good response: £162.86 was raised over and above the
£500 we need per month to subsidise the unwaged rate of FRFI.

Individual readers donated £74 and the FRFI Supporter Groups
organised stalls at Fairs, street collections and socials. They
raised: in South London £383.35, North London £277.46,
Edinburgh £141.31, Manchester £104.60, Liverpool £82.50,
Glasgow £39.20, Dundee £33.75, Leeds £21.90 and in Bradford
£4.79. Many thanks to all who contributed and helped achieve
the grand total.

Please keep the money flowing in. Make donations payable to
'Larkin Publications' and return to: FRFI BCM Box 5909, London
WC1N 3XX

I/we want to donate £_____ to the FRFI Fund.

Name/Organisation _____

Address _____

I do/do not want you to mention my name/organisation

HANDS OFF IRELAND



**Down with Thatcher's order!
Down with Thatcher's law!
FREEDOM FOR THE IRISH!
JUSTICE FOR US ALL!
IRISH SOLIDARITY MOVEMENT
DAY OF ACTION
5 OCTOBER**

Demonstration
Assemble 1pm
Bidborough St WC1
(nearest tube Kings Cross)

Rally
7pm Conway Hall
Red Lion Square, WC1
with Speakers, Music and Exhibitions

In Thatcher's Britain the state is preparing to suppress all forms of opposition to its savage anti-working class policies. The proposed amendments to public order legislation will extend the armoury of police powers contained in the Police and Criminal Evidence Act. These laws draw heavily on the experience of Ireland, the 1981 Uprisings and the miners' strike. These two laws, together with the Prevention of Terrorism Act introduced by a Labour government in 1974, will form an unholy trinity of repressive legislation.

The Irish Solidarity Movement has called this day of action to protest against Thatcher's vicious attacks on the Irish people and on the civil liberties of black people, trade unionists, peace campaigners, anti-apartheid activists, women's rights campaigners, gays and lesbians and other political activists. Come to the Demonstration and the Rally. Make common cause with the Irish struggle against British imperialism and unite against Thatcher's police state here in Britain.

SPEAKERS INVITED INCLUDE:

David Reed, author of *Ireland: the key to the British Revolution*; Sinn Fein; Members of Parliament; Councillors, Ex-PTA detainees; solicitor; Asian Youth organisation; anti-deportations campaign; Uganda National Liberation Front (anti-dictatorship); Molefe Pheto, Black Consciousness Movement of Azania; women's groups; anti-apartheid speaker; miners; Public Order Act campaigns; gay and lesbian groups.

AT THE EDGE OF THE UNION

Real Lives: At the Edge of the Union

Hundreds of people packed Haringey Civic Centre to see 'At the Edge of the Union' and find out what all the fuss was about. As the Real Lives theme music gives way to an innocuous long languid pan bathed in a tasteful blue, revealing a panorama of Derry, a stock BBC voice-over primes the unsuspecting viewer, this is a film about 'the extremes of both sides'. We are also invited to look out for the man 'thought by many to be the present chief of staff of the IRA'.

If the BBC's credibility is not to be confined to sections of MI5, some of the reality of the war in Ireland has to be shown. Hence the shots of army foot patrols picking their way through a hostile environment whilst the staccato clatter of a helicopter drones overhead; a colour party of armed IRA volunteers receiving a rapturous ovation from the thousands present at the Easter Commemoration of Republican dead as they march in close formation and fire a volley of shots into the air.

The 'day in the life' format of the programme relies in the main on a rather stage juxtaposition of the political outlook, actions, friends and family of Martin McGuinness and Gregory Campbell, the DUP Assemblyman, who has a well-rehearsed life in Paisleyite bigotry. Every time Campbell appears on screen he simply attacks McGuinness and calls for a shoot to kill policy against the IRA. As a macabre tea party conversation with Paisley himself 'reveals', Sinn Fein and the IRA are the same organisation... therefore, shoot to kill against Sinn Fein?

The programme reveals the neo-fascist essence of Loyalism whilst McGuinness in contrast presents clear and reasoned arguments in defence of the necessity for armed struggle to remove the British troops, the main bulwark against progress in Ireland.

When it is possible for the viewer to escape the claustrophobic narrow focus on McGuinness and Campbell, the film is at its most interesting. The period covered by the 'narrative' encompasses the run-up to the Council elections and the Protestant marching season, both of which were to hit the headlines. The victory achieved by Sinn Fein in gaining 59 seats is vividly captured with footage of jubilant Sinn Fein councillors and supporters parading round the Council buildings chanting I-I-IRA. The trouble that was to flare later in the year with the RUC re-routing loyalist marches is hinted at by Paisley addressing a rally and describing Protestants marching as 'one thing Republicans don't like'.

From the point of view of British psychos this film was too dangerous. In its concentration on the 'extremes' of Six County politics it had inadvertently removed the middle ground much beloved by the BBC, presenting a clear picture of a revolutionary democrat whose humanity shames the twisted bigotry of the Paisley clone Gregory Campbell. Whatever director Paul Hamann's intentions, his film isolates a disturbing aspect of the British occupation of the North of Ireland: the British state's alliance with neo-fascist Loyalism which would leave a nagging, questioning doubt in the back of the mind of most viewers.

Malcolm Ellis

The BBC documentary 'At the Edge of the Union' will be shown at meetings called by Irish Solidarity Committees and by FRFI Supporters Groups.

Edinburgh - contact EISC, c/o Box 110, c/o 43 Candlemaker Row, Edinburgh for details.

Glasgow - contact Glasgow FRFI, Box 10, 340 West Princes Street, Glasgow for details.

Leeds - contact Box FRFI, 59 Cookridge Street, Leeds 2.

Manchester - contact MISC, c/o Raven Press, 75 Piccadilly, Manchester 1.

South London - contact SLISC, 8M Box 1320, London WC1N 3XX.

North London - Public meeting on Thursday 12 September, 7.30pm, The Red Rose Club, Seven Sisters Road, London, N4. If you would like to organise a meeting at your college, place of work, local community write to ISM, 8M Box 1320, London WC1N 3XX - we can provide a speaker from the ISM and hire you the film (£5 per showing plus postage and packing).

BRITTAN'S BROADCASTING CORPORATION

continued from page 1

Adams as Chief of Staff). It is clear that the *Sunday Times* and some of its journalists are acting as direct agents of the British state.

Having prompted Brittan to demand the banning of the programme, it was left to the BBC Governors to do the deed on 30 July. The real objection to the programme was that it gave Martin McGuinness, an elected Sinn Fein representative, a public platform. Thatcher's attacks on such programmes were directed against the Republican movement and she claimed, for example, that the

IRA has caused 2,500 deaths in the past 16 years. This is a lie. Of the 2,447 deaths in the Six Counties at least 822 were civilians killed by Unionist or British military activity. 405 nationalists have been assassinated by loyalist paramilitaries. Little was said about the other major figure in the programme, Gregory Campbell, a loyalist politician whose main political argument is that all Republicans should be murdered.

Censorship of Sinn Fein is undoubtedly part of current British government strategy. Having portrayed the Republican Movement as isolated 'terrorists'

the government now has to explain away Sinn Fein's electoral successes. Rather than admit that the Republican Movement represents the political aspirations of the nationalist community, the British government prefers to obliterate all signs of their existence.

For all its talk of democracy the government forced (not much force was needed) the BBC governors, a collection of ageing ruling class ex-spies, company directors and former union bureaucrats elected by nobody, to ban the programme.

The strike action taken by media

workers on 7 August was a welcome step. British censorship became international news. However, the behaviour of many journalists on the picket lines revealed the limitations of their action.

In Leeds, Manchester and London Irish solidarity activists and communists were met with hostility by journalists on the picket lines. In London NUJ members used the police to try to remove all banners mentioning Ireland from the picket. ISM members had to make a determined stand in the face of police threats of arrest to keep their banners up. It is a strange strike against censorship which seeks to censor those who would support it.

In fact it was not a strike against censorship as such but against the government's public and crude destruction of the myth of media 'independence'. The journalists and the BBC management were concerned to preserve this myth. If there's any censoring to be done, the journalists will do it themselves - provided they are paid enough for the job. It is journalists themselves who produce the lies about Ireland and do nothing about the censorship which has gone almost unchallenged for the last 16 years. The NUJ has done nothing to implement its own policy against censorship (policy drawn up by FRFI NUJ members and adopted nationally in 1980). Vincent Hanna, NUJ National Executive Committee and son-in-law of Lord Gerry Fitt, when he had finished regretting the need to strike at all declared that the job of journalists was to 'expose' and 'oppose' 'terrorism' - by which he means the Irish people's struggle for self-determination.

It remains to be seen whether those who went on strike will now begin the crucial fight - against censorship itself, particularly censorship on Ireland. Honest journalists could start by opposing any alterations in the Real Lives programme when it is eventually shown and by campaigning now against the government's suggested new guidelines for journalists which if implemented will force journalists to act as police spies and bind them even more closely to the state's propaganda machine.

**Terry O'Halloran
Maxine Williams**

COMMITTEE PICKETS BBC

On 7 August, in protest at the BBC's censoring of the 'Real Lives' programme featuring Martin McGuinness, Manchester ISC along with the IFM picketed the BBC studios in Manchester.

The picket successfully exposed the BBC's role as the political guardian of British imperialism in the north of Ireland. There were about 30 people on the picket, outnumbering the official NUJ picket. Unfortunately, even though we offered our solidarity to the NUJ picketers they refused to stand alongside us saying that we were interfering with their strike to the IRA.

This of course could not be tolerated. They were, after all, not striking in support of the right of a representative of the republican movement to freedom of speech on the BBC, but rather in support of their own right to decide which programmes are 'suitable' to be shown to the British public on BBC.

Please note Manchester Irish Solidarity Committee's new address: c/o Raven Press, 75 Piccadilly, Manchester 1.

STAFF VETTED BY M15

It has now been revealed that M15 has a special room in Broadcasting House from which BBC staff are vetted. Whilst it is useful that such a fact should now become widely known it is sheer hypocrisy for leading politicians and newspapers to feign surprise. Secret Service penetration of the media has been known for years. In *The Kitson Experiment* author Roger Fall got details some examples:

Waldo Maguire, BBC Controller (1966-72), former member of Intelligence Service, War Office and Foreign Office.

Christopher Wain, BBC Defence Correspondent, Territorial Navy Intelligence Officer.

Derek Amore, BBC News Editor, former SAS member.

Alan Protheroe, currently BBC Deputy Director General, former Major in Army Intelligence. He spends a fortnight each year lecturing at the psychological warfare Joint Warfare Establishment.

UNELECTED CENSORS

Some of the BBC Governors:

Stuart Young (Chairman), senior partner in City accountants firm. Director of Tesco and British Caledonian. Brother of unelected Cabinet minister Lord Young.

Sir William Rees-Mogg (Vice Chairman) Ex editor of *The Times*, twice parliamentary candidate for Tories, failed to get elected.

Lady Faulkner of Downpatrick National Governor for Northern Ireland before 1 August and Labour appointee, widow of ex-Unionist Prime Minister Brian Faulkner.

Malcolm McAlpine, Director of Robert McAlpine Construction firm, second cousin of honorary treasurer of Conservative Party.

Daphne Park, according to author Jonathan Bloch, an ex-M16 employee.

Sir John Boyd, ex-general secretary of AUEW and Labour Party chair, notoriously right-wing.